

RHODA M. COFFIN

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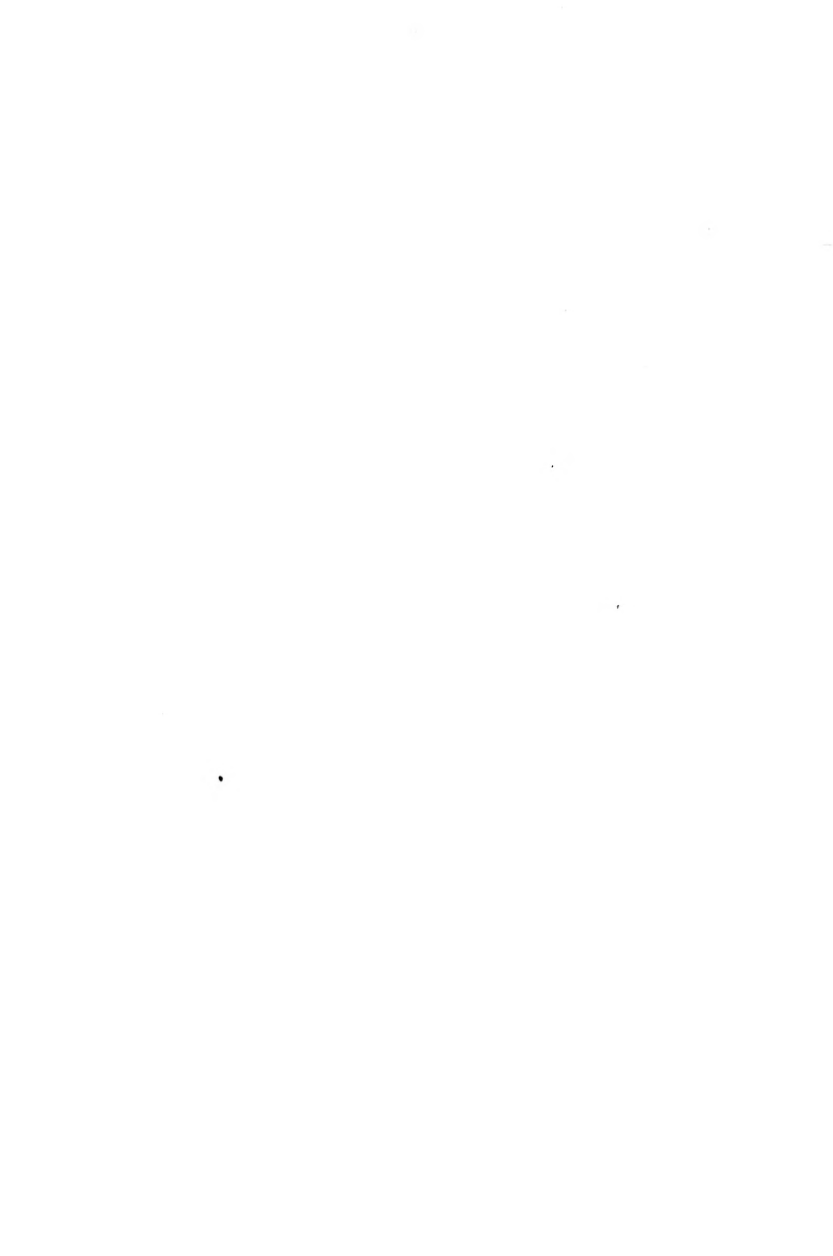
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RHODA M. COFFIN

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RHODA M. COFFIN  
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# RHODA M. COFFIN

## HER REMINISCENCES, ADDRESSES, PAPERS AND ANCESTRY

*EDITED BY*

MARY COFFIN JOHNSON



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DEDICATED  
TO THE MEMORY OF  
RHODA M. COFFIN  
BY HER FAMILY

With the kind regards of

CHARLES F. COFFIN





# CONTENTS

REMINISCENCES	PAGE
I. . . . .	3
II. . . . .	27
III. . . . .	53
IV. . . . .	69
V. . . . .	79
VI. . . . .	91
VII. . . . .	101
VIII. . . . .	123

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

I. The Friends' Mission School . . . . .	133
II. The Origin of the Home for the Friendless at Richmond, Ind. . . . .	141
III. An Account of the Origin and Conduct of the Women's Prison and Girls' Reformatory at Indianapolis, Ind. . . . .	149
IV. Annual Meeting of the National Prison Congress of the United States, Held in New York City, June 8, 1875. . . . .	163
V. Paper Read at the Annual Meeting of the National Prison Congress, Saratoga Springs, N. Y., Sept. 6th to 10th, 1884. . . . .	173
VI. The National Prison Association Meeting in Detroit, Michigan, October 18th, 1885. . . . .	191
VII. Children of the Street; Dependent Girls of Tender Age for Whom Homes Should Be Provided. . . . .	197

# CONTENTS

	PAGE
VIII. Some Account of Work for the Insane .	203
IX. The Hospital for the Insane at Dunning and the Cook County Infirmary, Illinois.	211
X. The Home Mission Association of Women of Indiana Yearly Meeting . . . .	215
XI. The Rise of Foreign Missions Among Friends; An Historical Paper. . . .	223
XII. The Results of General Grant's Indian Pol- icy as Shown by the Work of the Society of Friends Among the Indians. . . .	239
XIII. Women of the Orient. . . . .	249
XIV. The Noble Life of Sarah J. Smith, a Well- known Quaker Philanthropist. . . .	255
ANCESTRY . . . . .	267

## REMINISCENCES



# Rhoda M. Coffin

## I

### REMINISCENCES

“There be of them that have left a name behind them, that their praises might be reported.”—*Ecclesiasticus*, XLIV., 8.

THE life of Mrs. Coffin portrays to some extent the early record of many philanthropies, and is closely connected with movements which occupied her active years during the last half of the last century. Christian activity was the strong element in her nature. She turned to her Bible and her inner ear caught the words of Jesus when he took the ancient scroll, opened it and read: “The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.”

When she received this vision of the Christ of the Gospels, touched with humanitarian impulse she consecrated herself to bear the standard of the Lord in *practical* service, and soon pressed forward for the betterment of those in

## RHODA M. COFFIN

lowly conditions, the fallen and the outcast. She was not an idealist; her devising and shaping of methods, aided by earnest co-workers "in all their degrees," developed into practical things accomplished. She did not choose easy tasks, nor did she take up popular causes because they were popular. She interested herself in the common affairs of those she helped, having higher possibilities and ends for them.

She was optimistic in temperament, one who met life's tasks with good cheer, looking steadily at its hopeful side. She was not cast down at trouble, and sorrow did not despond her. She may sometimes have seemed radical in the advocacy of her policies and made mistakes, or been misunderstood, for her resourceful nature, her strong mentality and alert energy, gave her dominant traits. The works, ranging over a wide horizon, in which she took prominent part, are followed to-day with material benefits to the world.

The fruitage of such a life we cannot measure or recite—no sum of her contribution to the uplifting and betterment of human mankind can ever be given.

Mrs. Coffin's personal reminiscences of her earlier years are presented at the request of her family in her own words, and as it was primarily

## REMINISCENCES

written for her sons and their children, the simple object of printing it has been that it may be placed in the hands of each member of her family. The insight it affords into the rustic farm life of a well-to-do Quaker family of eighty years ago, living in a then thickly wooded and unsettled part of our country, will not fail to be an interesting record to any who love historical narrative of the times and the people who carved out the new domain of our Middle West in the beginning of last century.

She records the following narrative:

I was born 2nd month 1, 1826, near a small village called Paintersville in Green County, Ohio.

My parents were John and Judith Johnson. My father, the son of John and Rhoda Moorman Johnson, was born near Lynchburg, Virginia, 1st month 3d, 1795. His father, John Johnson, Jun., died early in the year 1803,<sup>1</sup> when my father was eight years old, leaving his mother with five sons and one daughter. Her sixth son, James, was born six weeks after his death. In 1807 she disposed of her property in Virginia, and with her family and necessary effects in a two-horse wagon, she left her native state and removed to Waynesville, Warren County, Ohio. I have heard my grandmother say that she was six weeks on the road.

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<sup>1</sup> John Johnson, Jun., died on, or about, January 14th, 1803.

## RHODA M. COFFIN

My mother was the daughter of David and Judith Faulkner who were natives of Virginia, living on Apple Pie Ridge, a few miles from Winchester. They removed from that state in the year 1800 on account of dissatisfaction with slavery, he having previously travelled on horseback from his home in Virginia to Ohio, entered a large tract of land, and built a small cabin. He returned, disposed of his property, and with his family in a two-horse wagon emigrated and settled in Warren County, Ohio. A great portion of the journey was through an unsettled country. Upon their arrival in Ohio they cleared and cultivated the heavily timbered farm. The climate proved very unhealthy, and they buried several children. It was at that time a malarial region.

My father's parents were friends of my mother's parents—Grandfather and Grandmother Faulkner—and my Grandmother Johnson went directly to their home. Land had been selected for her at the head of Cæsar's Creek near where the town of Jamestown now stands. There she settled and died.

She was one of the noblest looking women I ever saw. With perfect health she never laid by a day for any of her children, and never had one day's illness until the last week of her life, when death came in her eightieth year.

Courageously she toiled to care for, educate and support her children. With them she went into the forest, felled the trees and cultivated the ground, raising



## REMINISCENCES

the crops which supported her family. My father was twelve years old when they left Virginia in 1807. Her six sons, noble, staunch and true, grew to be men of influence and always entertained for their mother the deepest love and the greatest admiration, and reverence. All of them married except one who was not strong and never inclined to marriage. Three of her sons each named a daughter for her. I had her full name, of which I have always been proud. Her only daughter married when quite young, James Bryant, who was several years her senior, and brought up a large family of children.

Meanwhile, Grandfather Faulkner had left Waynesville on account of its unhealthfulness, although the soil was fertile and the scenery beautiful. He entered three thousand acres of land for himself and his children in Clinton County, Ohio, where Wilmington, the county seat of Clinton County, is now situated. This, too, proved malarial, as indeed was the greater part of the State in those days. After living here some years, he divided his land among his three sons, and settled himself eight miles north, midway between Wilmington and Xenia, where he lived until the 30th of 1st month, 1821, when he died suddenly.

My Grandmother Faulkner lived in the same place until 4th month 23rd, 1843, when she died in her eighty-fourth year. She was a great sufferer from asthma for many years, and much of the time during her latter years, was confined to the house. She was tall, erect,

## RHODA M. COFFIN

rather stout, of strong personality and character. Her daughters resembled her in appearance and characteristics.

I loved to sit beside her on a little stool, as she sat in the corner, her needle case, thread, wax and scissors hanging by her on the wall, and by her side a table with her Bible and work-basket. She would sew, knit, or spin, on her "little wheel," and tell me stories of their pioneer life, full of interest to me. For many years, with the assistance of her daughters, she spun and wove all of the bedding, table linen and clothing for her large family.

My Grandfather and Grandmother Faulkner were staunch Friends, both by education and conviction, active Elders, and influential members of the church.

When my father was about sixteen years of age, he went to live with my Grandfather Faulkner, whose sons had all left home. When my father was not needed on the farm, he worked for neighbors nearby who needed extra help. One man for whom he worked was a carpenter. From him, father learned something of that trade. With another he learned something of brick making, which served him good purpose in after life. From this experience, he had a tender feeling for all young men who had their living to make by "hiring out" as day laborers.

Whilst thus engaged, a mutual attachment was formed between my father and my mother, which eventually culminated in their marriage. My mother was trained in early life to hardship and toil. The women

## REMINISCENCES

washed the wool, carded it, spun it and wove it into the cloth, of whatever kind desired, jeans, flannels, etc. They made all the clothing worn by the family. The flax was broken, hackled and made clean, spun into thread and woven into linen for shirts, underwear, table and bed linen, towels, etc. The wool was also spun and woven into blankets and coverlids, some of the designs being quite pretty. I have one of the coverlids which my Grandmother made shortly after her marriage, and one which my mother made before her marriage. The geese were picked from which were made the feather beds and pillows. In short, everything needful for the family use was done by the women. The men toiled at opening up their heavily timbered farms. The trees were cut down, logs rolled and sawed with a "cross-cut saw," and thus the ground was prepared to raise crops.

My Grandfather Faulkner gave to each of his daughters a half-section of land, having the idea, which still prevails, that the daughters did not need as much as the sons.

My father and mother were married 5th month, 22nd, 1816, at Center Meeting, eight miles from Paintersville, and three miles from Wilmington. My mother "passed Meeting" in a purple bombazine dress, not unlike the alpaca of the present day. She was married in a light crepe dress. These she kept until my sister Phoebe was fourteen years of age, when she made a dress for Phoebe out of the crepe and one for me out of the bombazine. I have heard her say,

## RHODA M. COFFIN

that when ready to start for Meeting to be married her father took her out to the "horse block" from which a woman could mount a horse, and gave her a fine bay horse, with a new saddle and bridle. He talked with her a few minutes of the life she was entering, kissed her, lifted her into the saddle, gave her the reins and a new riding whip, and turned for his own horse, the big tears rolling down his cheeks. A horse, saddle and bridle were often given by the father as a bridal gift to his daughter. The mother had prepared such things as were absolutely necessary to commence housekeeping, the outfit of necessity being simple.

Her parents gave her a deed to one-half section of land, on which my Grandfather had built a small cabin. Here they began housekeeping, in an unbroken forest, with little else but two horses, a cow and a few agricultural implements, but with two pairs of willing hands and two loving hearts, strong in purpose, strong in body, and with a will that knew no such thing as fail.

Their son Brooks Johnson, was born 8th month 3rd, 1817, his name being the maiden name of Grandmother Faulkner's mother. He was a vigorous, healthy child, and grew up full of courage and energy, and was a great help to my parents.

Their second son, Joel Wright, was born 7th month, 30th, 1819. He also was a great comfort to my mother; gentle, loving and helpful. As he grew and became of age, he did everything possible to assist her when he could be made available. At the time of his death, he

## REMINISCENCES

was engaged to be married to Rachel Smith, a daughter of James and Mary Smith, who lived three miles below Waynesville on the Little Miami River. Brother Joel settled on a farm, adjoining my father's, a mile east of Waynesville. He died 10th month, 23rd, 1849.

The other children of my parents were as follows:

David Faulkner, born 8th month, 14th, 1821; died 11th month, 3rd, 1879.

Phoebe, born 8th month, 28th, 1823; died 1st month, 13th, 1863.

Rhoda, born 2nd month, 1st, 1826.

Eli, born 9th month, 25th, 1830; died 2nd month, 25th, 1901.

Rachel, born 10th month, 20th, 1833; died 2nd month, 17th, 1876.

Through all this period, my mother filled her place in life with a courage and devotion rarely met. She was a tall, well-proportioned woman, perfectly erect, with shoulders thrown back, strong, well-developed features, fair complexion, bright blue eyes, jet black hair, a handsome woman, and as I remember her, would weigh about 170 lbs. She was systematic in every detail of her household, energetic, full of courage, ambitious and deeply sympathetic with all who were in trouble, sorrow or suffering. She was a fine cook, a good housekeeper and very industrious. She prepared the clothing for her own household from the wool or the flax for many years, until manufactories opened within reach.

My father was a slender man of about 150 lbs. weight, 5 feet 11 inches in height, very fair complexion,

## RHODA M. COFFIN

light blue eyes and dark hair. He had versatile talents of no small order. Neither of them were stout. He had a sagacious, strong, well-balanced mind and excellent judgment. Commencing life with little education, by seizing every available means, cultivating every opportunity, reading and studying, he became a fairly educated man. Facilities for acquiring knowledge were not so great then as in this day, especially in country places. Hence to procure a reasonable education required great effort. He was industrious and enterprising. Having learned stone masonry, and how to make and burn brick, he built all of the brick houses in the neighborhood. Before I was born he built for himself a brick house of two rooms, also one for Grandfather Faulkner in which both he and Grandmother lived until their death. That house is still standing but little changed. They prospered and added to their comforts such things as seemed to be needed. His brother James, when about fourteen years of age, came to live with them.

I was born on the 1st of 2nd month, 1826, and brought, as I have been told, great joy to the household.

My sister Phoebe was a very delicate child, with little hold on life, hence as I was a healthy, strong child, full of life, I found a royal welcome, particularly by my father. When I was very young, I was sent to school to Evan Harris, who taught in the District School house, about three-quarters of a mile from home. The teacher boarded at our house and seeing my mother

## REMINISCENCES

so laden with cares, he prevailed on her to let me go with him to school. The schoolhouse was a log cabin, with a large fire-place at one end, and benches all around the room which had no backs. Hence the seats next to the wall were in demand, as the children could lean back against the wall. The teacher kept several switches, which he used most freely. Often have I seen him call up young men, make them take off their coats, and give them a sound thrashing, sometimes sending them out to cut the sticks with which he whipped them.

All of the scholars studied their lessons aloud, each trying to excel the other in the volume of voice. Those whom the teacher could trust were allowed in pleasant weather to go out in the forest which surrounded the cabin, to study. They made the woods ring with the noise, particularly when studying spelling. There were no blackboards and the scholars were not arranged in classes, except for recitation in spelling and reading. Much attention was given to these studies. On each Friday afternoon the school chose two "captains." These chose alternately one of the scholars for his side, until all who could spell were on one side or the other. The teacher then took the spelling book and gave out words from the portion passed over previously, each scholar spelling in turn. When any pupil missed spelling a word he must sit down, and the opposite side take it, and so on, until all had failed but one.

Once a month, the spelling of the past month was

## RHODA M. COFFIN

reviewed, and the defeated side must treat the school to apples and cider. If a tie occurred, as some times did, the teacher must treat. Often when visitors came in, I was "stood up" on the teacher's table to read for their entertainment. I had a natural taste for spelling and reading, and would read with great fluency, paying no attention to the commas or periods, until I was exhausted and must stop for breath.

I went two years to the Evan Harris school, and on the last day we had a spelling match. My cousin, Mordecai Painter, and I were very near the same age, and were chosen captains. We spelled down all the school, and then spelled for some time alone, when the teacher gave us "*Quelque chose*." Our knowledge of French was not sufficient to cope with this, and we both sat down, amid the cheers of the school. The teacher gave the treat. I have for him a fond remembrance. Although sometimes severe to others, he never spoke an unkind word to me. Many times he carried me on his back to the school in stormy weather. He laid the basis for spelling and readiness in reading. His failures were corrected by my next teacher, Morris Pritchard, from Raysville, Henry County, Indiana.

This teacher was an entirely different character, treated every one with respect and consideration. I loved school, learned with great readiness and was never punished. Not because I was so good, but because I loved to study and was always busy.

Mordecai Painter and his sister Lydia, were my playmates. His father and my mother were first cousins.



## REMINISCENCES

We lived near together and the families were strongly attached. Their parents were devout Methodists and faithful to morning and evening devotions, all the family kneeling and usually the father called on some one of them to pray. I delighted to spend the night there, that I might be present on these occasions.

Friends had much to say in their Meetings on the awful solemnity of prayer, of approaching God vocally, but in that family they came simply to God and seemed, to my young mind, to be talking to him face to face, and I longed for the same privilege. The thought that it was awful to pray to God was repugnant to me. If He was really our Father, He would hear us at any time when we wanted to talk to Him.

After these visits I kept thinking about it and longing to talk with Him. At last I went out behind the barn, by a straw rick, and there knelt down, after having looked all around to see if any one was near, and told Him all about how I felt; that I wanted to know if I might not come to feel that He was in Heaven, that I was His child, and would He please make us all Methodists, so that we could all come together and talk with Him, just like my cousins did. It was a very simple, awkward prayer, but God heard it.

He did not make me a Methodist, but He made me His child. I rose from my knees so happy. It was such a sweet thought that I had really talked with God, just like I did with my father. From that date I loved to pray and the spirit of it has never ceased.

## RHODA M. COFFIN

I did not know then, but I now know that I had received new life, and a new relationship with my Father in Heaven. I kept it very quiet.

My parents were praying people and taught us of *silent* prayer, and the necessity of obeying God and keeping His laws.

Those were dark days in the Church. The protest against formality had run into the most rigid formalism. There were many noble men and women (among these were my parents) staunch and true Christians, doing what *they* conceived to be right, and rigidly training their children in the straight and narrow way, and it was a *narrow* one.

My parents were members of Newhope Particular Meeting, about a mile from our house. We children generally walked to Meeting. On one occasion,—I remember it well,—my mother had bought each of us a light calico dress. It cost, as she afterwards told me, fifty cents a yard, and was considered very nice. She made us some pink bonnets, and gave each of us a little handkerchief. When we were dressed up we felt very fine, never more so, and started to walk to Meeting, with our little handkerchiefs folded and hung over our arms. We were very much pleased with our outfit and walked along admiring ourselves. But when we were seated in Meeting and there was solemn silence, I observed that I had lost my handkerchief. I was greatly troubled. The tears ran down my cheeks during all the meeting. What should I do? I was watched by Joel Thornburg, an uncle of my mother's, a vener-

## REMINISCENCES

able minister who seldom spoke, but sat with his chin resting on his folded hands over the top of the cane which he usually carried. He was always dressed in drab. He shook hands with my Grandmother Faulkner, who was an Elder and sat by his side. I was so glad my father and mother, who were Overseers of the Meeting, sat on a seat below them. Joel Thornburg saw my distress and came to me to inquire the cause. Diligent search was made, but I never saw the handkerchief again. I am sure my sorrow for that loss was as heavy for me as much greater ones have been since. It made a lasting impression, and in after years caused me to remember children's sorrows as not to be lightly passed over.

There was no such thing as a carriage in the neighborhood, hence father and mother either went about in a two-horse wagon, or on horseback. When we went with them on horseback they would take a child behind that was large enough to hold on to their waists, and the smaller ones in their arms in front.

My brother Eli was born in 1830, 9th month, 25th, and sister Rachel in 1832, 10th month, 20th. These two children were a great delight to me. They were great pets. Eli was very bright and loved to work. When ten years old he could be put into a field to plough by himself, where he would be as diligent as though father were with him. Rachel had a sweet and gentle disposition and was very handsome.

In 1832 father, with the help of his older sons, burned the brick and built himself a new brick house, a brick

## RHODA M. COFFIN

milkhouse, woodhouse, and smokehouse. The dwelling house still stands.

I think it was in August, 1868, when my second son, Charles Henry, and I drove in a carriage through the country by Eaton, Springboro, and Waynesville, stopping for a few hours to visit my old home, and then to Wilmington and Martinsville, Clinton County, Ohio, to attend a series of Meetings held by the Committee on "General Meetings," appointed for that service by the Indiana Yearly Meeting. I was a member of the Committee.

After several days' service we left for Richmond, Indiana, by way of Wilmington, Xenia, Dayton, and Eaton, Ohio, being desirous of once more seeing my native home, my birthplace. The road from Wilmington to Paintersville was full of interest. Many changes had occurred. Much of the land, once swampy woodland, was now well drained and very fertile. We passed by old Center Meeting House, three miles from Wilmington, where my parents were married, and where the Monthly and Quarterly Meetings to which we belonged when living near Paintersville, were then and are still held. As we stopped at the little old Meeting House, and sat upon the old seats, my memory went back to early times. We visited the graveyard near by where my grandfather and grandmother were buried, and many relatives and friends. It was in a most dilapidated condition, with no tombstones to mark the special resting places.

## REMINISCENCES

From thence we went to Grandfather's old home. The house which my father had built, still standing in a good state of preservation, was occupied by a cousin, Azel Walker. We found the spring house, with its everlasting spring, and the old well-sweep for drawing the water from the well, still in use. We then went to my old home a half-mile further on. The barn which my father built was still filling a useful place. It was here that I first prayed to my Heavenly Father, a sacred spot to me. The dwelling house was but little changed. It was well kept and looked bright and cheery. The wife of the owner kindly allowed me to go over the house. I was disappointed to find the cherry trees, one hundred of them, which my father had planted and from which we had gathered cherries, were all gone. The old apple orchard, with its fine pippins and "Seek-no-Further," the plum thicket, and the frog pond where we spent so many hours in our play, were gone, and in their places were a new orchard and a fine field of corn.

I was heartsick. The thought had never occurred to me of the changes which had, as a matter of course, taken place. My reason would have taught me, had I thought, but the memory of the childish scenes of the old home, were so imprinted upon my mind that time and events had not effaced it.

I felt that I must see the "Painter's Run," that ran through the field, where we had so often waded, and sometimes got a little spanking for it when we had been forbidden. It was a spirited little creek, and at times

## RHODA M. COFFIN

was deep and dangerous. There I had seen the sheep driven in and washed, preparatory to shearing.

As I made my way through the cornfield, I met a man ploughing. When I drew near, he looked at me eagerly for a moment, dropped his reins, and with both hands outstretched came towards me, saying, "Excuse me, but is this not Rhoda Johnson, the little girl that I used to carry 'pick-a-pack' to school?—It is the very same face." It was John Ary, the owner of the property. We had not met since I was nine years of age. I was now the mother of six children, and he proudly said, "I am ahead of you, I have ten. I have changed, but you have the same look you had when you were a little girl."

When I was between eight and nine years of age (1834), my father sold his farm for \$2500, and bought from Abijah O'Neill for \$5000 a farm seventeen miles from our old home and one mile east of Waynesville.<sup>2</sup> The house was a large brick one, with a big kitchen, beautifully located on a high hill. The farm had rich "bottom land" on the Little Miami River. My father felt that he must give his children better opportunities.

The removal was a great event in our lives, and changed the whole tenor of them. In September, 1835, we left Paintersville early one morning. My mother regretted leaving her mother and those of her family who lived near her, and going to a strange place, to new surroundings and associations. But to her chil-

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<sup>2</sup> This estate afterwards bore the name of "Diamond Hill."

## REMINISCENCES

dren it was novel and full of interest. Mother rode on horseback and carried sister Rachel, who was a baby, in her arms. The boys drove the stock, and father and Uncle James drove the wagons, the latter having kindly volunteered to help us move. We children rode in the wagons, or when we were tired we got out and walked. Our neighbors had cooked an abundance of food for us, enough to last several days. We arrived at our new home about four in the afternoon, having travelled seventeen miles, a great journey for us children, who had never before been so far away. We children were full of excitement, exploring the new home, while the older ones were busy, some caring for the stock, others in carrying and arranging the furniture. But our poor mother was not so enchanted, for she, fatigued with her journey, entered an empty house, with supper to get, and beds to be arranged. She sat down and wept. Father hurried up the fire, put the kettle of water over the fire, and then came to comfort our dear mother, so dear to his life and of whom he was so fond. I remember the scene so well. None of us could bear to see mother weep. She was a person of great energy and soon was bright and cheery. We sat down to a good supper, and ere long were all at rest.

Waynesville is situated on the side of a hill overlooking the Little Miami River and its rich valleys. Since then I have travelled much over the world, but have seldom seen a more beautiful country. My father's farm was situated opposite the village, with the river

## RHODA M. COFFIN

running through it. The house, as I have said, was situated on a high hill. There was an expansive view all around. The "County Road" leading from Waynesville through Harveysburg to Wilmington passed on the north line. The "County Road" leading from Waynesville to Clarksville passed on the east line.<sup>3</sup> Uncle Micajah and Aunt Rebecca Johnson, with

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<sup>3</sup> The following "Recollections" of this old homestead were written by a citizen of Waynesville, Ohio, and published in the "Miami Gazette" in 1892.

On the hill top, over the Little Miami river and across the valley, there stands an old historic house; it is not a ruin, it is not in decay, its walls are not weather stained nor moss grown, but it is an ideal home; not merely a habitation, but a home in everything which the name implies; a center around which the affections cling and to which memory goes back with fond recollections.

For nearly one hundred years those old walls have stood there; their open portals have been the objective point of many a belated and weary traveler, where he was at least sure of welcome and rest.

In October of 1798 Abijah O'Neill and Samuel Kelly bought of Dr. Jacob Roberts Brown his military claim of 3310 $\frac{3}{4}$  acres of land situated in the Virginia Military Reservation north of the Ohio river. A part of that purchase lay on the east side of the Little Miami river opposite the town of Waynesville and was known as Brown's Survey No. 791, containing 660 acres, the patent for which was issued to Abijah O'Neill, as signee of Jacob Brown and bears date at Washington, Jan. 17, 1800. The consideration was 66 $\frac{1}{2}$  cents per acre. Mr. O'Neill moved his family to Waynesville in the autumn of 1799, and the following winter made some improvement on the present Diamond Hill farm. In the spring of 1800 he moved his family into a rude log house which had been constructed and began to make a home. The beginning was rude and many privations were to be borne. At that time I am not aware that there was a square



## REMINISCENCES

their large family, lived on a farm adjoining on the Clarksville Road.

The land had been much exhausted by unskillful

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rod of cleared ground on the east side of the Little Miami river north of where the town of Morrow now is, yet wherever a tree was cut down so the sunlight could strike the ground, anything that was planted would grow. Corn was the great staple; it furnished not only bread for the family and food for the stock but the fodder was the rough food for the winter, hay not being attainable; sometimes hay was cut and cured on the prairie lands northeast of Xenia, and afterwards hauled eighteen miles over emigrant trails; but this made very expensive provender. Time and labor bring many things. Slowly the forest receded, acre by acre the fields were enlarged, houses were built and men had come to stay. With the influx of immigration there came many wants. The first school that was taught in the settlement was taught by Joel Wright in 1802 at Mr. O'Neill's house. He also taught in 1804, 1805, and in 1807, and in 1808 Elizabeth Wright, sister of Joel, taught in the same place.

In the meantime many changes had taken place around the rude home; gardens had been made, orchards planted, wells sunk and substantial out-buildings erected. In 1803 a church had been organized (the Friends) and so rapid had been the influx of Friends from older states, that in 1805 it is said there were more than one thousand names on its church books.

In 1808 the present substantial brick house was built. There have been changes made in the interior construction; windows have been enlarged, doors closed up or new ones made, porches built with a gable placed here or a balcony hung there, until it is modernized into a handsome suburban residence, but the old walls of 1808 are still intact, and it is the same old house.

Mr. O'Neill was a surveyor and a large dealer in land, was a prominent member in the Society of Friends, and probably no man in the whole countryside had a larger acquaintance than he. It was to him that the emigrant came when he was hunting a place to locate his home; to him the settlers went to have their disputed boundary lines adjusted; to him every scheme for the

## RHODA M. COFFIN

farming, but my father was a good farmer, and soon made it to "Blossom as the rose." My three elder brothers, Brooks, seventeen years of age, Joel, fifteen,

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betterment of the country was brought; his house was alike open to rich and poor; his door was never closed to an applicant for shelter nor his charity withheld from a worthy solicitor. Such men as Gov. Morrow, Col. Richard C. Anderson, of Louisville, Kentucky, and Judge Burnett, of Cincinnati, were his close personal friends, but perhaps the most distinguished guest ever entertained at the Diamond Hill home was the great Indian Chief, Little Turtle, Chief of the Miamis, than whom there was no finer specimen of Indian character. It was he who commanded the Indians at Harmer's defeat in 1791, at St. Clair's defeat in November of the same year. Of him E. D. Mansfield, Editor of the Cincinnati Gazette says: "The most acute and sagacious Indian statesman; he had wit, humor and intelligence; an extensive traveler and a polished gentleman." It was his last visit to Southern Ohio, and he looked for the last time upon the beautiful valley of the Miami, and bade farewell to each hill, and wood and stream forever.

During the War of 1812, many of the friendly Shawnee Indians were sent from Northern Ohio, into the settlements to get them out of danger of being massacred by the hostiles, and at least two of these, a mother and daughter, the wife and child of General Harrison's interpreter (Charles Ash) were for many months inmates of Mr. O'Neill's household.

In all those days of early pioneer life it would be safe to say that there was never a key turned nor a bolt thrown in a door, but that all were free to come and go without a question, sure of a welcome.

In 1823, Mr. O'Neill died and the homestead passed to his youngest son, Abijah, jr. The mantle of the father descended naturally to the son. In 1834 he sold the premises to Mr. John Johnson, and moved his family to Western Indiana.

Mr. Johnson, the new owner of Diamond Hill, was the eldest of three brothers who owned farms which lie adjoining. The family were all members of the Friends' church, and as the un-

## REMINISCENCES

and David, thirteen years old, were healthy, energetic, industrious boys, and gave him valuable aid.

We had entered on a new scene of action. The people were more cultured, the schools were much better and our advantages greater in every way.

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happy division had taken place in 1828, they were attached to the Orthodox branch of that denomination.

The two oldest brothers were enthusiasts in everything pertaining to educational matters, and their children enjoyed the best advantages which the neighborhood afforded. The home of Mr. Johnson was a common center, a rallying point, and as there were twenty-eight first cousins in the three families, all living within a circle of a mile, the house was always gay with young society. The juniors brought their lessons, their recitations, and their ebullitions of wit and humor home with them from school and the circle around the broad hearth was sparkling with sallies of youth. With such surroundings there was no chance for one to grow rusty or old. How could old age find a resting place in such a household?

On the settlement of Mr. Johnson's estate, which took place about 1847, the farm passed into the hands of Edward Lynch, of Lynchburg, formerly of Lynchburg, Va.



## II

“There is not a human life that is now potent for good, which is not shaped and swayed in large measure by the influence of lives which have passed from earth.”—*Selected.*

For my father and mother I have no words but of praise and thanksgiving. Their self-sacrifice, their tender care, firm discipline, training in industrious habits and perseverance to overcome all obstacles, have been of much value to me. We were taught to work, and must needs labor. My father was a scientific farmer, taught not by books but by personal observation. He used to explain to me when he took me out into the fields, why he did certain things, the difference in the soil, its adaptability to certain seeds, why he did this and why he did not do that, and *how* he did it. I loved to go with him when he was dropping the corn. He would take two rows, and give me one, then stepping over and helping me with mine, he talked with me and explained different things in which he saw I was interested. Thus he taught me habits of observation. He never punished me without explaining why he did it.

But this delightful mode of life could not last. My mother needed me in the house, for she was over-burdened with work. I could attend the children, run errands, and standing upon a bench which father had made for me, wipe the dishes. The family was large,

## RHODA M. COFFIN

and reliable female service could not be procured. I entered on new duties and learned new lessons, but the free life I had led suited my inclination better.

We had good schools in the winter which we children all attended. Our mother put up nice lunches for us, cold fresh backbones and spare ribs, doughnuts, apples, and the best of mince pies. She would bake thirty or forty at a time in the big Dutch oven. They were superior to anything we have now. We were all expected to help with the work mornings and evenings. In inclement weather we rode to school, two or three on one horse. Our parents were very careful that their daughters should not be unduly exposed. Thus the outdoor life, which I led joyfully, and the indoor, of necessity until it became a pleasure, formed the basis of a good constitution, never knowing a day's illness during my single life. The natural energy was cultivated both by precept and example.

Life moved on apace. Years passed by without any striking event. By my mother's side, and under her direction, I was taught all kinds of work that it was needful for a woman to know, excepting weaving. This I did not learn, as my mother's loom had been left at the old home. I was taught to spin wool on the "large wheel," and flax and cotton on the "small wheel." I soon could spin my "dozen cuts" a day on either, which was considered a full day's work. No homes where we lived had carpets on the floors; indeed, I had never seen but one. We must needs have them in our new home, as my mother said she did not intend

## REMINISCENCES

to live differently from our friends around us. Cast-off clothing was cut into strips, about half an inch wide. Such as were dull in color were dyed bright colors. They were tacked together and wound into balls ready for the weaver. The chain we spun, usually out of "tow," the refuse of the hackling of the flax. This was dyed, and the two woven into a carpet, such as was in general use. They were sometimes quite pretty, and always serviceable.

My father, in a few years, tore down the log kitchen, and built a brick addition with a dining-room and kitchen, and chambers above. Year by year we worked upon the carpents, until we had all the rooms carpeted, which was a great saving of scrubbing and labor. For our reception-hall, which was a large hall through the center of the house, mother and I spun the chain of tow and the filling of wool, dyed the different parts to meet the pattern by which it was made, and by the Autumn we had the pride and pleasure of laying on our floors forty yards of "Venetian" carpet, as it was then called.

The wool was spun into yarn, and the stockings knit for all the household for Winter, and for Summer flax was spun into thread and knit into stockings. By my mother's provident care, her knitting was always a year ahead of the needs. Wool pickings, carpet tackings, quiltings, apple parings, for drying apples or making apple butter, were not uncommon. The neighbors came in and helped for help in turn. They usually spent the day and had a good meal and pleasant

## RHODA M. COFFIN

social life, which we all enjoyed. There was but little else in the way of amusement.

Our evenings in the Winter, after having done the evening's work, was spent first in studying our lessons, then mother and daughters knit or sewed, while father or one of the sons read aloud from a book. Sometimes we sang, for my father was a beautiful singer, and could detect a false note in an instant. We loved to hear him sing, and were never more delighted than when he would indulge us. At other times apples were brought in and nuts cracked and eaten. Then father retired, and all who chose sat up later. He loved to go to bed early and get up early, mother liked just the opposite. It was at such times that she gave us those personal talks, which to me have been so valuable, the importance of governing our appetites and controlling our passions. Those delicate subjects, and delicate thoughts, were conveyed in the most delicate manner, but with no uncertain sound, enjoining purity of thought, purity of action, and manner of conduct toward the opposite sex, and as each one entered the marriage relation, she did not leave us uninstructed as to our new relations, its privileges, its responsibilities and duties. To her I owe much of the happiness of my married life.

The training was rigid, but filled with love. Ours was a loving home. We were happy in each other. We were taught to try to surmount every difficulty. Farm life is a barren life at best, intolerable where love is absent, but we knew no better, and we knew no



## REMINISCENCES

other life as our associates had the same surroundings.

We had no Sunday-schools, but our parents taught us the Bible. My mother always read the Bible with an "intonation." I loved to hear her read. We were taken to Meeting when it was possible. We loved to go, although the Meetings were mostly in silence. It is quite probable that the change and chance to see our friends and talk with them was the prime cause of our desire to go to Meeting. We rarely heard a sermon except when a "travelling Minister" came.

We had very pleasant associates. My Uncle Micajah Johnson with his ten children, three-quarters of a mile from us, uncle James Johnson with his eleven children, only one and a half miles away, and our family of seven made a group of itself. Then there were the families of Thomas Evans, James Smith, the Samuel Jones', and Browns, and many others, all of whom were leading, active Friends.

At Springboro, eight miles away, there were the Butlers, the Batemans, the Stantons, the Strouds, and others, and there was much intermingling. Our associations was largely with Friends. We had a large Quarterly Meeting at Waynesville. The Cincinnati Friends belonged to it. Some of them always attended and brought into our midst no inconsiderable amount of refinement, Harriet Steer, William Crossman, the Taylors, Morgans, Anthonys, the Bonsalls, and others.

Our house was always open to Friends, and many of them were frequent visitors. At Center Quarterly Meet-

## RHODA M. COFFIN

ing, fourteen miles east, there were George Carter, Joseph Doane, Abraham and Jacob Carpenter, and many other of our warm personal friends. The presence of these and their personal influence had much to do in moulding my life for future action.

In September, 1842, my brother Brooks married Lydia Burson, the daughter of Dr. Edward and Jemima Burson, after the order of Friends, in Wilmington Meeting, she being a member there. Though very young, sixteen years old, I was one of the bridesmaids. It was quite an event in my life. Lydia was a most lovely woman, handsome, bright, lively and warm-hearted. She was welcomed into our house as a great treasure. There immediately sprang up between us the closest sisterly relations. She entered with zest into all that interested me, and attached me closely to her. She was the more valuable, as I was just entering society. This I did very early, as my elder sister was an invalid, and my three brothers older than myself, desired a sister to receive company and to go with them to the homes of young ladies. My father never allowed me to go out in the evening unattended by one of my brothers, nor ever on any account to stay out after 10 P. M. If I must needs remain longer I must stay all night. I could receive young gentlemen at home all I wished, but they must leave at 10 P. M. I used to feel the rigidity of the rules then, but as I look back to my training, I see the wisdom of it.

A short time after my brother's marriage, I went to Richmond, Indiana, to attend the Indiana Yearly

## REMINISCENCES

Meeting of Friends held at that place. We went in our two-horse carriage. There were no railroads then in that part of the country. All went to the Yearly Meeting in carriages, wagons, or on horseback. We stopped at a hotel kept by William Nixon, where the Huntington House afterward stood. The cost for board at that time was \$2.50 per week. Three young married couples were there. Brooks and Lydia, James Ladd and his wife Elizabeth, and Samuel Lippincott and his wife who lived in Richmond. She was very young, only a child, and he about thirty years of age. Her family would not consent to their marriage and they had eloped to Kentucky, were married and returned to the "Nixon House," where he had fitted up a room. Of course, we had a very loving atmosphere in which to breathe. It was there I first saw my future husband. He, being acquainted with my brother called to see the bride, and I was introduced to him. He was young and handsome. I had no thought of marriage at this time.

Friends had purchased a farm one mile west of Richmond, with an old house partly log and partly frame, for the accommodation of Friends who came to attend the Yearly Meeting. This farm is now occupied by Earlham College. The horses were turned out to pasture. All Friends who chose could avail themselves of the use of this farm, for themselves, their horses, and conveyances. Many did so, taking provisions with them, straw in their wagons, and sleeping in improvised beds on the floor, or in their wagons. All contributed

## RHODA M. COFFIN

to a common fund and were as one family. The women did the work in the house, and the men the work outside, sometimes adding to their other necessary work the killing and dressing of beef, hogs, or sheep. Many of them traveled long distances. It was a time of much interest to them, and a great treat. There was much monotony in their lives at home. This outing was a real change of scene and interest. They enjoyed mingling with their friends socially and religiously. Many valuable friendships were formed, and lasting benefit received. The attendance at the Yearly Meeting was very large, especially before Western, Iowa, and Kansas Yearly meetings were set off as separate Yearly Meetings.

The Yearly Meeting was held in a large old Meeting House known as Whitewater,<sup>1</sup> and continued to be held there until it was declared to be unsafe, and in 1878 a new house was built on the corner of Fifteenth and Main Streets in Richmond. The old structure was sold for a storage warehouse.

The situation was quite beautiful, being surrounded by a grove of trees. Many Friends came in their wagons, and camped in the grove. The Friends at that time were expected, nay more, required, to wear the garb known as "plain dress." If they refused they frequently were not allowed to remain as Members. The immense crowd presented a very unique appearance. Those from

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<sup>1</sup> This venerable "Old Meeting House" was a large two story brick building first occupied in an unfinished condition in 1823, and completed in 1827.

## REMINISCENCES

the cities, and the richer more cultured of them, dressed richly and beautifully, with complete harmony in the color of the dress, gloves and bonnets. Others, less favored, were very quaint in dress. There were many young Friends in attendance. These came together of afternoons and evenings, taking walks together, etc.

The subject of building a Boarding School was claiming attention, and strong efforts were made to bring this to pass. The young people organized for work and assisted toward raising money for the completion of the buildings. That was my first work for the Church.

The opportunities for education were very much limited in the Middle West. Few families had libraries. The young people were restrained as with "bit and bridle." The limitations built around them were rigid, composed of "*thou shalt nots*," lest they be contaminated with "the world." The people were true and honest in the convictions, hence they held the reins, with a firm hand.

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It was thought very doubtful propriety for them to stop at a "tavern." There was a query read every three months, "Do Friends avoid frequenting Taverns?" Many friends of our parents felt much troubled about our exposure. However, the "Nixon House," previously referred to, was a very harmless sort of tavern and we escaped without conscious injury.

This was the Autumn of the political campaign in 1842, and Henry Clay had been invited to Richmond to address a political meeting, hoping to win the Quak-

## RHODA M. COFFIN

ers to his party. He stopped at the "Nixon House" and of course was very social, shaking hands with every one. When the brides were introduced, he kissed them all. I remember secretly rejoicing that I was not a bride. I thought him a very homely man, and not desirable looking enough to have him kiss one. We returned home, feeling that the world was much larger than we had thought, and from our new experiences we had learned much.

Brooks and Lydia settled on a farm adjoining the little town of Springboro, Warren County, Ohio. Brooks had built a small cottage, painted it white with green window shutters, a pretty little home. They were very happy, and came often to see us. Father was very fond of Lydia, and we all loved her. Brooks had a close place in the heart of the family. There was much going back and forth. Their son was born 4th month 4th, 1844, and named John Edward for the two grandfathers. He was the eldest grandchild in the family and a great favorite.

About this time (1844), the Little Miami Railroad was built from Cincinnati to Xenia. It passed through my father's farm. He took a contract for the construction of three miles of the road, including that which ran through the "bottom land" of his farm, also a contract for building freight and passenger station houses. These were located on his farm, and a town site laid off, which he named "Corwin."

On the completion of the road, Governor Thomas Corwin, Judge George J. Smith, Governor Morrow,

## REMINISCENCES

and Judge Dunlavy of Lebanon, the county seat of Warren County, personal friends of my father's, and Mr. William H. Clements, the President of the road, and others, came to the opening of the station houses and the railroad. The first train which passed over the road from Cincinnati to Corwin, was filled with prominent men, for whom a public dinner was served by the citizens of Waynesville and country side. It was a gala day and full of interest, for it was the first railroad train many of us had ever seen. There were hundreds of people there from the country around, and as many as the cars would hold were taken for a short ride.

In the same year our house was modernized and reconstructed, so as to meet the needs of the family. A portico was built over the front door, with six large pillars or columns. The house, barn, and all the out-houses and fences surrounding were whitewashed. It represented a pleasing appearance, as it rested on the high hill, overlooking Waynesville, the river, and the hills for many miles around, and the grounds were made beautiful with shrubs and flowers. Roses, honeysuckles, evergreens and shade trees were planted. We enjoyed this improvement and ~~we~~ thought it very beautiful. I think so still.

In the early Autumn of 1844, my brother David married Catherine Carpenter, daughter of Nathaniel and Zeruiah Carpenter.

The Carpenters had removed from Peekskill, N. Y., and settled two miles from Wilmington, Ohio. They

## RHODA M. COFFIN

were very genteel people, and brought with them more culture and refinement than many others had, and their influence was uplifting. Catherine and her sister Mary had been educated at Westtown Boarding School. We soon became intimately acquainted. David and I were very closely attached, being near the same age and having the same associates. He was a loving, helpful brother. His choice of a wife was most congenial. The marriage took place at Cincinnati, whither her parents had removed from Wilmington a short time previous. It was accomplished at Friends' Meeting. I served as one of the bridesmaids with Thomas Kite, who was one of the groomsmen. The marriage day proved to be a pleasant one. The next day we went by carriage to Waynesville to a reception at our home. It was forty miles from Rose Hill, the home of the bride's father. An excellent macadamized road ran through a beautiful, well-cultivated portion of the State, passing through Sharon and Lebanon.

The young couple spent the Winter at our house, and in the Spring removed into brother Joel's house on an adjoining farm. To them were born eight children, three of whom are living, four died unmarried, one, Charles Albert, was married and left a wife and children who reside at Hutchison, Kansas. Brother David died January 4, 1879, full of peace and sweetly trusting. Sister Catherine died January 31, 1899. For many years she was blind and a great sufferer. She was a noble wife and a noble mother.

After their marriage I went with them to the Yearly



## REMINISCENCES

Meeting at Richmond and again stopped at the "Nixon House." We had a delightful trip through the country and formed some new acquaintances. I again met my future husband, Charles F. Coffin. He and David had previously met and corresponded. Charles came to call on the bride, and took us to see the Friends' Boarding School, in which we were all interested. I then had no thought of marriage with him. I admired him as a cultured gentleman, but my heart was yet free. I was very anxious to have a better education, had strong aspirations to do for myself, to choose some means of livelihood, some independent course of action. There were then no avenues open for women but household service, sewing, or teaching. My mind was on the latter.

There was apparently a very fine opening for me at Hillsboro, Highland County, Ohio, in a Young Ladies' Seminary. With the offer came the promise of free tuition, and an assured position either as a teacher at home or as a Missionary under the auspices of the Congregational Church. This seemed to be an opening in the line I had chosen, but my father strongly objected as it would take me from among Friends. As a duty to my parents I submitted and gave it up.

My father employed Elias R. Smith, a very bright young man and a good teacher, to teach a Winter school in our house. A room was set apart and fitted up for the purpose. Several of the young people of Friends attended. We had an interesting Winter and enjoyed the school.

## RHODA M. COFFIN

I again took up my home duties and labored on cheerfully. Much of the hard work gave way to lighter employment, as the country grew more prosperous. Manufacturing establishments were opened and the heavier work of preparing goods was transferred to machinery, but there were as yet no sewing machines. The shirt-fronts of from forty to fifty plaits had to be stitched by hand, also collars and cuffs. Handkerchiefs and ruffles were hemstitched. Notwithstanding the improvements there was still much hard work to be done. Among other things, butter and cheese were to be made, and forty geese to be picked every two months until all the beds were supplied, for every child was given a feather bed. The days of mattresses were not yet, and a feather bed was thought to be one of the necessities of life. All this was done by mother and myself. I picked one hundred pounds of feathers for myself after the others were supplied.

My father raised a large number of hogs each year. These were killed, and the product cared for at home, candles to be dipped and moulded, as there were no candle factories. There were no canned fruits, but all the fruit for winter use was either dried or made into preserves and jellies. In the Autumn we made several barrels of sweet apple cider. One barrel was boiled down for mince pies, apple butter, etc., the remainder was for drinking and making vinegar. In drying apples and making apple butter, the men took part. During the day suitable apples were selected and in the evening we all gathered together and pared them.

## REMINISCENCES

Early in the morning the pared apples were put on to cook in large kettles with the needful amount of boiled cider. These large kettles were made of bell metal or brass. There was a big iron crane fastened in the chimney jamb; on hooks attached to this were suspended the kettles of apples. They were allowed to cook for several hours. Then one of the men stirred it constantly until it was pulverized and thoroughly cooked. This apple-butter kept for months and was used for sauce and tarts. In the early part of my life, the bread and pies were either baked in a large Dutch oven in large quantities, or in an iron oven or skillet which had an iron cover. Coals of fire were put on top and underneath. It made sweeter pies than any other process. Mush was made in a kettle hanging on a crane over a wood fire. This was hot work. We burned wood altogether. The vegetables were cooked in the same way. When stoves were invented for cooking, though very heavy and cumbersome, they brought great relief. I well remember the first cooking stove I ever saw.

Besides all the labor and the general routine of housework each day, there were garments to make, quilting, mending, knitting, etc. I disliked knitting. It was too prosaic, tedious and uninteresting, so I always managed to get my aunts to do much of it. I would have several stockings on the needles at once, so as to be sure to supply all those who wished to knit when visiting us with an opportunity to do so. My aunts were good knitters, my Aunt Martha Walker

## RHODA M. COFFIN

especially. The sisters when they visited each other never took their own work, but worked for the one whom they were visiting. So in this way I struggled along through my girlhood days without any marked success in knitting. It is true that I was the subject at times of many jokes, remarks and criticisms. These I bore with patience, for was I not getting my feet supplied with stockings without being forced to do the disagreeable thing?

It all went smoothly until after a while I began to think about changing my life, and asked my father, then suffering from an illness from which he never recovered, if he was willing I should encourage Charles Coffin's attentions, with the idea of marriage? He replied at once "No." When I expressed astonishment, for my father seemed to like Charles very much, he replied, "It is not Charles Coffin that I object to, but I will never palm my daughter off on any man, without her knowing how to do everything that a woman may be called upon to do." I was surprised, for I imagined I was full of wisdom and knowledge about housework. I inquired what it was in which I was lacking. He said that there were two things that I had never learned to do well, knitting and making soap.<sup>2</sup> My conscience said, "Yes, he is right." I at once asked Joel, my sec-

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<sup>2</sup> That John Johnson had as high an ideal of the sacredness of the marriage estate and that it was only "to be entered into reverently, advisably and in the fear of God" there is no question, but his object was that his daughter might be fully trained in all matters relative to good housekeeping needful for a housewife to know in those days.

## REMINISCENCES

ond brother, who was sitting by, and was always ready to help me in any way, to please go quickly and put up an ash hopper and fill it for me, and turning to my sister, who was the champion in knitting stockings I said, "Please Phoebe, get the yarn for me and scour it, and when dry wind it for me," to which my father, as he lay upon his bed, said "No, neither of them can do so. Joel may do the work, but just as *thee* directs him—thee must direct him. Everything must be according to thy own idea. The stockings and socks must be thine own work. And when thee has a barrel of soap as nice as thy mother can make, and a pair of stockings and socks completed as well as *she* could do, thy mother being the judge, I will give my consent, and thee shall have a father's blessing." I said, "Come Joel, good-bye to the housework and everything else but the knitting and the soap." I toiled and worked steadily. Sometimes my conscience would say "help mother" but it was astonishing how little use she seemed to have for me; "I am not needing thee, child," was her response.

At last I was victorious. What mother had failed to accomplish by her advice, instruction and discipline, love made easy and in triumph I bore a sample of work to my father. Some of my soap in one hand, and my stockings and socks in the other, all the family following in procession for all were deeply interested, and several of them *had given a little advice*. In triumph I laid them on his bed, my mother saying as he looked up at her, "They are quite equal to anything that I

## RHODA M. COFFIN

can do.” With a loving smile he gave me his blessing, “May my darling daughter find in the man she has chosen one in every way worthy of her.”

But to return to my narrative from which I have wandered.

My aspiration, of which I have written, in regard to an education which would fit me for teaching, had not been quenched. I availed myself of every opportunity to increase my knowledge. I saw that my father’s health was failing, and finally in the Autumn of 1845 he consented to my going with Brooks and Lydia to Richmond to attend the Yearly Meeting, and if a suitable place could be found for board, I might remain and attend “Whitewater Monthly Meeting School,” held in the Friends’ School-house. Arrangements were made for me after the meeting to board at Sanders Horney’s. I knew his wife as she had come from near Waynesville. The Yearly Meeting was interesting. I was thrown with Charles F. Coffin a good deal in the evenings, and in connection with the “Young Friends’ Boarding School Association,” in which we were both interested.

At the close of the Yearly Meeting, Brooks and Lydia returned home, and I entered upon my school duties. There were six boarders, some of them very pleasant persons. Friends were very kind to me. There were several small companies made for me, among the first, one by Francis and Elizabeth Fletcher who were very kind and to whom I became much attached. The school was the leading Friends’ School in the

## REMINISCENCES

Yearly Meeting. It was under the care of a committee of Whitewater Monthly Meeting. Our Boarding-house was an attractive place for young people, but I was all absorbed in my studies and cared but little for anything else. I had been accustomed to the society of young people and the attentions of young men. I had received offers of marriage, not a few, and some of them my parents thought were very suitable, but none of the men came up to the ideal of what my husband should be. I had respect for all of them, and for some high esteem but no responsive love in my heart, an essential requisite in my estimation. My father once said to me that he was afraid I would "Go through the cane brake and take up with a crooked stick at last." But, praise the Lord, I had no such experience. I got a straight beautiful stick, one who just suited my heart and fancy. Charles F. Coffin belonged to our Lyceum, and I was in his company frequently. His sister Caroline, who was then a young girl and attended school, was very kind to me and invited me to their house. Ere long the attachment and interest in each other grew unconsciously to us, and so far as I knew, unsought. Our friendship and interest was ripened into love. We had each found our ideal, a true mate. His frequent visits and attention soon became the subject of remark. At this juncture in February, 1846, I received the intelligence that my dear father whom I had left feeble, was very ill, and Nathan Moffitt who was engaged to be married to my cousin Rhoda Ann Johnson, Uncle James' eldest daughter, was go-

## RHODA M. COFFIN

ing to Waynesville to visit her and offered to take me with him in his buggy. There were no stage-coaches or railways so I gladly accepted his offer and left Richmond thinking I might possibly return.

I found my father hopelessly ill. He was delighted to see me, and seemed so comforted to have me with him, that I at once relinquished all thought of returning to school. It was a great pleasure to be able to cheer and brighten the remaining months of his life.

He never murmured nor repined, but patiently bore his sufferings which were intense. Charles came to see me the first of April. My father was much pleased to form his acquaintance, and gave his approval of the engagement. It was a subject of interest to him the remainder of his life. He knew that he must die and made all preparation for it with a confidence and acquaintance with God which was most striking.

He arranged for us all. He made my mother as comfortable as he could and then full of faith and a confident assurance of an eternal life, he awaited calmly the coming of the Lord. A few days before his death he had a visit from George Carter, David Bailey, Joseph Doane, and Jacob Todhunter, all intimate friends, tried and true. They were a great comfort to him. After a season of conversation and prayer they left him, all much affected as they knew death was approaching.

On the morning of June 10th, 1846, after committing his wife and children to Him whom he loved, he passed into unconsciousness and in a few hours was for-



## REMINISCENCES

ever with his Lord. A post-mortem examination revealed the fact that his physician had mistaken the disease and the remedies were the opposite to what should have been administered.

The funeral occurred the following day. A large concourse of people attended. He was interred in the Friends' Burial Ground.<sup>3</sup>

We returned to our home a sad household. Our circle was broken, the head was gone never to return. Our dear mother seemed as if she could not say "Thy will be done." They had been one in spirit, one in heart, and one in life. Friends came from miles around to pay their last tribute to his life amongst them.

Brother Brooks and sister Lydia and their little boy fourteen months old, had been with us for some time during the last days of my father's life, and now returned to their home at Springboro. Brother David and his wife who had lived on an adjoining farm, left in a few months for Cincinnati, where he went into business with his father-in-law.

It was a great comfort to me to have Charles come to see me a few weeks after my father's death. He was straight, erect, with a pleasing face, a good conversationalist, dressed very neatly in strictly Friends' garb. In those days he was very rigid in all the observances of the Society and had great veneration for the Ministers and Elders of the Church. I thought he was the nicest and most lovely man I had ever seen.

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<sup>3</sup> Father and mother and brother Joel have since been removed and interred in a Cemetery one mile east of Waynesville, Ohio.

## RHODA M. COFFIN

He did not seem to have a flaw in his personality. He is more lovely and dearer to me now than he was then.

My father's death necessitated the disposal of the farm for many reasons. My mother could not take care of it. My marriage which was in contemplation would take me from home; Eli and Rachel must be educated. The estate was to be divided and father had arranged for brother Joel who owned the adjoining farm, to take our mother with him and have oversight of the younger children. It was a sad trial for us all to see our beautiful home go into other hands.

The time for my marriage was arranged for the next Spring. It was a necessity that I should stay with my mother for a season, as she leaned on me and looked to me for assistance. Those were interesting months, waiting and preparing for the event, but they were also sad months. Everything and every place spoke of my father. Everything that had not been left to my mother had been sold. The farm was bought by Edward Lynch, an old friend of my father's, with our reservation until March, sparing our removal until after my marriage. David and Eli were given possession of their property; Joel arranged his house for a home for mother, Phoebe, Eli and Rachel. The two youngest needed to be in school for some time to come.

In August, 1846, my cousin, Rhoda Ann Johnson, was married to Nathan Moffitt. Charles F. Coffin and I were attendants for them. Charles brought his sister Caroline to visit us, whom we were very much en-

## REMINISCENCES

joyed. The bride and groom left the next day for Richmond, Indiana. Nathan Moffitt in a few days afterward took the typhus fever and died in six weeks, leaving his bride a young widow.

Mother's youngest sister, Aunt Rachel Arnett with her husband, came to live for a time with my mother. She was a great favorite with us all.

The home remained in our possession until after my marriage, which took place March 25th, 1847. The wedding-day was beautiful. Charles was dressed in a black coat, a light velvet vest, and light trousers. His coat was a Friends' coat; this was the first time he had ever had a black coat and it was considered quite an innovation. He had a broad-brimmed hat and was the picture of neatness. I was dressed in a cream-colored satin dress, gloves and shoes to match, a white bonnet after Friends' pattern, a collar and spencer of tulle trimmed with white satin folds. I made all of my outfit myself.

We were married at the Friends' Meeting House, in Waynesville. We had "passed" the Monthly Meeting the day before in which we had personally "appeared," and declared the "continuation of our intention of marriage," and asked for a meeting to be appointed on the 25th for the accomplishment of the same, which was granted and a Committee was appointed to attend the marriage and see that it was "accomplished according to Friends' order." Friends were not required to procure a license to marry, but the

## RHODA M. COFFIN

Church was held responsible for the marriage, and must see that it was accomplished in a proper manner.

Thomas Evans and wife, James Smith and wife of that Meeting, and Dr. Jesse Harvey and wife, were appointed the Committee at our request. We rode to the meeting in a buggy, and Brooks and his wife followed in their buggy and sat facing us at the Meeting, my mother being by my side and Thomas Arnett by Charles' side; thus the marriage was accomplished. A large crowd came as was always the case. The wedding party was a small one, none but the Committee, William A. Rambo,<sup>4</sup> and Miriam, and their little son Edward, from Cincinnati, and my brothers and sisters were present, for mother could not think of having it otherwise. Uncle Thomas and Aunt Rachel had come to spend some time with mother.

The next morning we left for Richmond, my new home. Brooks and Lydia went with us. At this time there were no railroads or stage-coaches, and but very few turn-pikes and macadamized roads. The country roads were almost impassable. We had to travel several miles to reach the Lebanon and Dayton turnpike. It had snowed the night before and was raw and chilly.

I felt much for my poor mother, leaving her so lonely and sad and obliged to immediately vacate the property. Yet I was happy and joyful in my union.

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<sup>4</sup> Mrs. Rambo was Charles F. Coffin's eldest sister. The marriage certificate, still preserved, was read immediately after the marriage ceremony was said.

## REMINISCENCES

We went to Dayton, and from there stayed at a small hotel at West Alexandria, left there at an early hour for Eaton, Preble County, Ohio, where we had a good breakfast, and started at 8 A. M. for Richmond, sixteen miles west. The National Road had been completed and laid out from Cumberland, Maryland, to Eaton; the remainder from there to Indianapolis had been ploughed up but nothing more. It was a terrific ride and took us eight hours.

We reached Father Coffin's at four in the afternoon, chilled and weary, but when he came out of his home to meet us with his genial face, lifted me out, put his arms around me, kissed me and said "Welcome daughter to a father's heart and home," it warmed me through and through. He seemed to take the place of my own dear father. I always loved him after that. He took me and introduced me to my husband's mother, who stood in the door with her calm sweet face, saying "My dear, this is our new daughter." She was not so demonstrative, but gave me a sweet kiss, and took me to the parlor and introduced me to Charles' only brother William, and Sarah his wife, to Cousin S. Francis Fletcher and Elizabeth, and Albert Blanchard and his wife, as "our daughter-in-law, Charles' wife." That word daughter-in-law went like a cold chill through my heart. She had no thought of hurting me; it was the customary mode.

This experience taught me a lesson, and when in after years my sons brought to me their wives, I took them into my heart as daughters and loved them as

## RHODA M. COFFIN

such, and have never used the phrase “daughter-in-law” in connection with them.

They had provided a nice dinner and we thoroughly enjoyed it. We all went to Meeting the next day, and in the afternoon Brooks and Lydia left for home. The door had closed upon my past life.

### III

“It would be well if the members of every Quaker Community could occasionally link themselves up with the past and review the lives and deeds, the animating spirit, and ideals of the persons who broke the paths which they themselves daily travel.”—*R. M. Jones.*

A NEW era had dawned upon me; a new life with new duties and new relations. A life of great responsibilities, of hallowed relationships. The past had been a preparation for the duties upon which I now entered. When my dear brother and sister had returned to their home, I began to realize more fully the entirely new obligations which I had entered upon, and the need of adapting myself to the new position. But I had married because I loved with all my heart. Soon the sadness of the leavetaking vanished, and I entered into my new duties and added enjoyments with a happy heart and full of joy and gladness. In my husband I found one in every way worthy of all my heart could desire.

He had employed Samuel Cox, a Friend, to go to Waynesville for my household goods. In the months of preparation I had secured all things needful for housekeeping, even to my laundry tubs and the most minute articles. I set apart for my wardrobe and household effects four hundred dollars, of which I had used three hundred and forty dollars, leaving a little

## RHODA M. COFFIN

for any needed additions. Charles had laid by twelve hundred dollars, out of which he bought a house of four rooms on a lot of fifty feet with a rough summer kitchen. The front room on the first floor was our parlor, which I had furnished with a pretty figured carpet mostly cotton, costing nine dollars and sixty cents; a wooden settee, six wooden chairs, a wooden rocking-chair, father's bookcase and a large looking-glass; a breakfast table with a dark baize cloth on which was an astral lamp. The other room was used for a sitting- and dining-room, in which was a rag carpet, a table, a half dozen rush-bottom chairs and a nice set of dishes.

My father had given me on my fifteenth birthday a set of cherry-wood furniture. Charles had a bedroom set also, and with these we furnished the two upper chambers. All of the rooms except the parlor, had rag carpet, sixty yards of which I had made myself, or rather prepared for the weaver.

When we had all things ready we took up our abode in our new home with great delight. Everything was new and we thought that we were fixed very nicely. Charles made and tended the garden, sawed and split the wood, and piled it up in the most perfect order, making even a woodpile a thing of beauty. I did all the housework.

We stayed at Father Coffin's a week, until our household goods came and this gave me an opportunity of getting acquainted with the family. There were three daughters at home, Caroline, Mary, and Hannah Ame-



## REMINISCENCES

lia, all young and enthusiastic girls. They entered with much interest into all of our arrangements and were much comfort to me. It was a delightful life.

I always regret seeing young people go to boarding when married; they miss so much pleasure in working together, making, arranging, accumulating, and the responsibility of building up and managing a home.

The working together unitedly, the sacrifice for each other, the mutual dependence upon each other, form a union of strength. The weaning from other associations, which in a degree is very important, the concentration of the thoughts and the affections of the heart on each other, tend to the yielding together so firmly that no outside party or influence can penetrate nor wedge separate. A new life is formed, a double life, and this new life and the cares which in their course come upon them, only strengthen and develop their union and their united powers and they are able to build up a home where God is glorified.

When we entered upon our new life we had no secrets from each other. We consulted together as to how much it was desirable to save out of Charles' salary which had just been raised to six hundred dollars, and decided to try and save half of it. We then set apart an amount to be expended for clothing. The remainder of the three hundred dollars was for our livelihood, food and necessary expenses. I was a good cook, knew how to do all kinds of work, but had never been stinted in the use of materials for cooking, for at my father's house we had great abundance of everything

## RHODA M. COFFIN

raised on the farm, and the best quality of milk, cream, butter, honey, etc., so when it came to using but one pint of milk a day at a cost of one cent, and all the cream we had was what could be taken from this, it is easy to see that I had to learn over again, but Charles was so kind as to be easily satisfied; and I soon learned to prepare the food in a delicate manner out of such materials as I could afford, and we really lived quite well. I took charge of the finances of the house and adjusted the larder to suit the purse.

We arose at 5 A. M., Charles made a fire in the stove and put the tea-kettle on; then attended to the wood, the yard and the garden as was needful, while I prepared breakfast. We made it a rule in beginning housekeeping, to always have family worship and never vary from it. Charles started to the bank at 6:30 A. M. and I was left alone.

Everything was done systematically; all the provisions were brought in by farmers. There were no meat-shops, bakers or grocers. The general merchandise stores kept groceries. All had to be purchased from the farmers and we were obliged to take what we could get. At the end of the year we had saved three hundred and sixty dollars out of the six hundred dollars.

My daily work was soon done, and then commenced the tedious part. I had nothing to do; I sewed for Mother Coffin, helping to make the girls' dresses, etc., and then systematically commenced to read all of the Friends' books, of which our library was composed. I did this not from inclination but because I thought it

## REMINISCENCES

a duty. It was weary work; I would read until tired, then lie down and take a nap, then go to reading again. I always enjoyed reading the Gospels, but never enjoyed reading what *men* thought of them or their explanations of what they meant; it was man's ideas of what Christ meant; the Gospels were what Christ taught, what He knew of the Father, the Will of God as revealed by Him to us. Hence in reading the one I was weary, in reading the other I was refreshed. The one was man's thought's, the other, Christ's own revelation of God's love and His instruction. The works of George Fox and some of the Friends who lived in his time, and others who followed after, were considered by many Friends almost sacred, and we were expected to receive their teachings without question, to think as they thought, to do as they did, and to dress as they dressed. There was no liberty or individual opinion.

I had, and have now, a peculiar mind. I never could follow closely in a groove laid out by another. I tried hard to do so, for I realized that my position was an important one. The time had come when I felt that I had a work to do, that "I must be about my Father's business." I was in a position to exert some influence, and it was important that I should act so as to exert an influence which should not close the way or in any way hinder the service of either my husband or myself. The soul longed for liberty but there was none. I must need follow on as our fathers had done or there was no possible chance for usefulness in the Church. The going outside of it for work

## RHODA M. COFFIN

was not to be thought of. I honestly tried to walk as they directed, and to dress as they thought I should dress but it was all an utter failure.

Some years afterward, when in 1872 I was walking in the streets of Jerusalem, I passed by a shop where lay a large number of yokes. I had seen the poor women with them on and carrying heavy burdens, and my heart was touched with deep sympathy. I picked up one of them, put it on my shoulders and had the burden which I had seen one of them carry, hooked on to it, and I assayed to do the same. I could not; the yoke was galling, it fretted, hurt and rasped me. The burden was heavy and I soon begged to be released. The "yoke master" said to me, "You have made a mistake, you have on the wrong yoke. Let me fit one on you which is suited to you and adapt the burden to your strength." He did so, attached the burden and I could walk away cheerily, for it was adjusted by one who knew how, not by another. Had I possessed the courage to rise above my surroundings and claim my liberty in Christ to follow Him whithersoever He led, and let *Him* adjust the yoke on me which he had prepared for me, and adjust the burden, my life in its results would have been far different. I honestly tried to follow others but I was not in the right place, for I was not following Christ. I was not doing the work He would have me do, nor in the way He would have me do it. I was not in the niche my Father intended me to fill.

The old Whitewater Meeting House built many years

## REMINISCENCES

before, had never been cleaned, though thousands had occupied it.<sup>1</sup> The large gallery used but once a year at the Yearly Meeting was particularly in a bad condition. Elizabeth Brown, Rebecca T. Hobbs, Elizabeth Fletcher, myself and one or two others decided to clean it. This was my first effort at church work at Richmond. Believing that "cleanliness is next to Godliness," we commenced our work, having collected from those who were of like mind two dollars, to aid us in the necessary expenditure. John Brown brought his horse and wagon, and he and Samuel F. Fletcher helped to carry the large ponderous benches, take out the windows, etc.

It was very hard work but cheerfully we labored, thinking that every one would appreciate our efforts. But in this we were mistaken, for many thought it meddlesome. "It has always served us thus and why could it not now? It is pride," said one. Another said that we had made a great mistake in not asking the Trustees for the privilege, as they were the "sole custodians of the property, and no one had any right to invade that house to clean it." They protested, but

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<sup>1</sup> The "Old Meeting House" which is still an interesting landmark [1910] was completed in 1827. It was ceiled inside with natural wood unpainted and unvarnished, and seated with heavy wooden benches. For almost a generation these had retained the natural dingy wood color. While no actual filth appeared, for it had been regularly swept, it curiously lacked the minute points of cleanliness that Mrs. Coffin and her co-workers were awake to see needful. They had the merit of making a thorough-going endeavor to improve its appearance.

## RHODA M. COFFIN

it was too late; the nearest way out was to finish it. One of the dear Friends so faithful to his trust J. P., walked back and forth before the house wiping away the tears, and when I went to try to comfort him, he said, "water will rot out all the sills, and there are them windows, they have never been taken out before, and have never let a drop of water in—Rhoda, thee did it, coming here with thy new fangled notions."

I did not feel sorry that I had come, nor that we had progressed so far along with the cleaning that they could not stop it, but my first effort was rather disheartening, and my first lesson was so effectual that I never undertook that job again. The Church had it cleaned yearly after that.

In our home life we were very happy. Samuel F. Fletcher and wife, who were cousins of Charles, were very kind as were many others, and we soon formed a pleasant social circle.

In the Spring we added a new bedroom off our porch, and May 3rd, 1848, there came into our hearts and home a new joy, a son, our first-born, a dear little boy, Elijah, named for his Grandfather Coffin. He was a beautiful baby and highly prized by both families. This event was followed by a severe and protracted illness of about eighteen months. I was a great sufferer caused by stupid ignorance on the part of my medical advisors. By mistaken medical treatment I was tortured and given up as hopelessly ill. My continued illness was a great disappointment. I felt intensely the great burden that I was on my husband

## REMINISCENCES

and his family. If it had not been for his loving kindness and constant tender patience and care I should have utterly given up. I gave myself as best I could to my Heavenly Father. I asked for help, and He gave it. In October of the same year, Charles, with sister Phoebe who kindly had come to care for me, took me in a carriage to my mother at Waynesville, Ohio, to be under her care, and to receive medical treatment from our old family physician. I remained six months, during which I passed through suffering indescribable caused by blistering and old-time methods of treatment.

The doctor brought several consulting physicians, who finally said there was no hope, and we went home again, my faithful sister with us. I believed through it all I should get well. By the Providence of God I then was placed under the care of one of God's noble men, Dr. John T. Plummer,<sup>2</sup> and through his instrumentality I was restored to a moderate degree of health, but my strong constitution was shattered.

For a season we boarded, as household service was so difficult to obtain. When smallpox broke out in the room adjoining our own, my sister went home and we went to Father Coffin's, our little boy with us, who had grown finely under my sister's care. It seemed so sweet to care for my own baby. We remained at Father Cof-

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<sup>2</sup> Dr. John T. Plummer was born in Montgomery County, Maryland, 1807. A more devoted worker in his profession, as well as to other relations to life, has seldom lived. His beneficent career left a deep impression on those who knew him which is ever recalled with gratitude and cheerful remembrance. He died at Richmond, Indiana, April 10th, 1865.

## RHODA M. COFFIN

fin's several months until I was able to go to house-keeping. Nothing could exceed their kindness to me.

During this time, in the Autumn of 1849, Indiana Yearly Meeting took place. There I first met with Edith Griffith, a Minister from Ohio Yearly Meeting. She was a most remarkable woman for that period. She was tall, erect, with strong features, dark complexion and keen black eyes, and was very sympathetic. A mutual attachment was formed between us which continued until her death.

Harriet Steer was also one of the guests at Father Coffin's. She was a woman of fine physique and strong mental endowments, who interested me much, and a very close attachment was formed between us. These women who were older than myself, did much in moulding my Christian life and character. Rebecca Updegraff was another remarkable woman. All of these women were our guests in after years. Harriet Steer for thirty-two years came to us at these Annual Meetings. Rarely has there been and rarely have I met such a combination of talented and consecrated women, all Ministers of the Gospel. Their influence over me while they lived, was great. One by one they have been gathered home, but I still feel the influence of their lives.

My brother Joel died soon after the Yearly Meeting in 1849. He was a great loss to us all, a noble man. I was not able to go to him, and felt his death exceedingly. After his death brother Brooks disposed of his Springboro Farm, and took Joel's, where he and Lydia resided until her death, 12th month, 28th, 1850, leav-



## REMINISCENCES

ing a son seven years old, John Edward, born 4th month, 4th, 1844, and an infant daughter three weeks old, born 12th month, 6th, 1850, whom they named Lucy for Lucy Borroughs, an intimate friend to whom she gave the babe. Mrs. Borroughs filled her trust lovingly until the death of her husband Joseph Borroughs, when she felt that she could no longer care for the child. Several arrangements failing, Lucy was placed in a Convent. At my earnest request she was withdrawn and lived with us. She was a sweet, loving girl, and ever felt an intense longing for a mother's love. As near as possible I gave it to her. I loved her parents dearly and we all loved the child for her own sake, and from her own heart she gave us her love in return. Her home was with us until she married Benjamin J. Goodin, a young man of exceptional character who lived in Cincinnati and who proved to be a loving and devoted husband. They have become earnest Christians, and practical useful members of the Episcopal Church, and of the community in which they reside. I think she is one of the most remarkable women I have ever known,—not strong in body but full of courage, she has risen to every emergency in life. “The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, and her children arise up and call her blessed, her husband also, and he praiseth her.”

Since Mrs. Coffin passed away, Lucy B. Goodin died after a brief illness, May 19th, 1910.

After my brother Joel's death, my mother with

## RHODA M. COFFIN

Phoebe, Eli, and Rachel, went to Waynesville to live. My Aunt Rachel Arnett resided with her during her husband's absence on a Ministerial service in England. Their sojourn was a short one. Aunt Rachel died in September, 1850, and my dear mother the same Autumn, November 2nd, 1850, both with dysentery. Thus in thirteen months four of our most loved and brightest were taken. I was so thankful that I was able to be with my mother during a portion of her illness. She was so patient, spoke of going home to be forever with the Lord and the loved ones gone before. It was a sad time, but amidst it all we were never forsaken, and were supported by our Heavenly Father.

The home was once more broken up. Phoebe went to live with David, and Eli and Rachel to Friends' Boarding School.

Early in the Spring of 1850 we hired a horse and phaeton from William Cheesman, and leaving our son Elijah with Mother Coffin, drove through the country to Richmond, Jefferson County, Ohio to visit sister Caroline who had married William H. Ladd and settled there. Their daughter Ellen was then a sweet baby. We stopped to visit the State Institutions at Columbus, the first I had ever seen. The sight of these inmates made me very nervous and my sympathies were fully drawn out. We were six days making the journey. After leaving the National Road we found travelling most difficult; there were no good roads. We enjoyed our trip, formed some interesting acquaintances, and returned home greatly benefited.

## REMINISCENCES

We found our little boy talking quite nicely through the diligence of Sister Mary, and Hannah Amelia.

The same Spring, 1850, we sold our bridal home and purchased a house and lot on Front Street (now South 4th) near Main Street, and our little family began housekeeping again with my husband, baby and myself. We were happy and all absorbed in our darling boy who developed beautifully.

On September 1st, 1851, Charles Henry our second son was born, a bright lovely child. I enjoyed intensely the privilege of caring for my own babies. Our little family was a source of great pleasure. We felt the responsibility and mutually dedicated our children one by one, as they were given, to the Lord. It was a sacred treasure, one for which we rejoiced with thanksgiving. Charles Henry was a delicate child and required watchful care.

On October 10th, 1853, another treasure was given, our third son. My sister Rachel was then living with us, and she named him Francis Albion. He was a great favorite with her and continued to be while she lived. He was a beautiful little fellow, gentle and affectionate.

On January 8th, 1856, William Edward our fourth son, came to cheer our hearts. It was a bitter cold time. The thermometer stood at 28 degrees below zero with no means of heating the rooms but open wood fires, for I could not live in a stove-heated room. We found it very difficult to keep him sufficiently warm. He was a bright boy full of energy and life, just as

## RHODA M. COFFIN

joyfully welcomed as the first. With our boy quartette, my hands were full. I kept but one servant and she was generally a young girl. I made all of the boys' clothing and cared for them myself. It was a pleasure to care for, train and develop them.

In 1858, leaving our boys with my sister Phoebe, we went East, my first trip, going by way of Niagara Falls, we spent several days at Montreal. We were dressed in Friends' costume and attracted much attention as we walked the streets. The city is largely Roman Catholic, and, as it afterwards appeared, they thought we were a new order of Priests and Nuns. We visited all the places of interest, then by way of Lake George and Lake Champlain, to Boston, stopping at the Revere House. We saw everything there of public interest. By invitation we went to Lynn, Massachusetts, guests of Charles F. and Maria Coffin. Most sweetly were we received in their lovely home. We spent several days with them, extending our acquaintances, many of whom we had entertained at our house. Nathan and Mary Breed and their interesting family, Samuel and Eliza Boyce, William Boyce and wife, Isaac Bassett and family, Micajah Pratt and family, and many others were added to our list of friends. To us it was a great feast as it was a charming circle, all persons of wealth and much culture.

We also went to Providence, Rhode Island. Here we became much interested in Friends' Boarding School, and formed other new acquaintances, among them Dr. Toby and family, rich, accomplished and most attrac-

## REMINISCENCES

tive Friends, Benjamin Buffum and his wife, and others who have since been our life-long friends.

While in New York we were the guests of David and Paulina Sands, whom we had also entertained at our house. This was a most interesting family. David Sands was a man of wealth and far ahead of the spirit of the times. His family were interested in his works of philanthropy and benevolence. His daughter Martha, who afterwards married Lindlay Murray Ferris, and Anna, a beautiful girl, who afterwards married Edward Payson Roe, the author, were much engaged in their work among the poor in "Five Points," then the lowest slums. We stayed with them a week and went with David Sands to the Hospital for the Insane, to the Tombs, and to visit various kinds of philanthropic work. We saw much and tried to learn our lessons well, and as we look back we remember their Christian hospitality and their devotion to the cause of Christ, with fond memories.

We formed the acquaintance of William and Mary Wood, William Cromwell and family, Edward Marshall and wife, and many others. In Philadelphia, we were the guests of Isaac and Rebecca Collins, and went with them to many of the noble institutions; the Houses of Refuge, of Correction, and other public charities impressed us deeply. With Rebecca Collins we visited the Eastern Penitentiary, and our interest began through her in work for the improvement of prisons. During this visit we laid the foundation for our after life service. Nothing we had ever learned before had such

## RHODA M. COFFIN

an effect upon us and on our future lives. The example of these persons of wealth, of their devotion, and their manner of service, was of infinite value to us. They have all gone from earth, but the influence of their lives affects the lives of others and still remains with us.

The notable event of 1858 was the birth of our little daughter on the third of August. She brought with her sunshine and joy. We named her Mary Amelia and dedicated her to God. She was a great treasure, beautiful, gentle and loving in her disposition.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> For further account of this dear child see Chapter VII, page 104.

## IV

“Of all Christian literature, the purest, and richest, and most fruitful field is that of Christian autobiography.”—*London Christian*.

My health now in a measure restored, I felt that I should do something for others. No way seemed open that met my desires. I searched my Bible and soon settled it in my own mind, that if I followed Christ I must of necessity live as He lived, and as I traced His life, I learned that it was spent for the bodies and souls of men, that He was occupied in doing good, helping the poor, visiting the sick, comforting those in sorrow, lightening the burdens and increasing the joys of the world. There were at that time few poor families in Richmond. These I sought out and aided.

For some years I served as a member of the “Committee on Education” of the Friends’ School at Richmond; the duties were to select teachers and look after the method of instruction. When the High School of the public school system was established, Father Coffin, Esther Hadley and myself were appointed by the city as “Visitors and Inspectors” of the conduct of the School. We were given a good deal of power. At first this work was very interesting; after a few years the service was done away with.

Literature of any kind was very scarce in the town

## RHODA M. COFFIN

and country districts; private libraries were rare, and public libraries, few and limited in the supply.

The Friends' Book and Tract Committee, of which work Father Coffin and Charles were among the leaders, was established.<sup>1</sup>

I was a member of this Committee thirty years. In the work I entered with zeal and interest. It supplied many Friends with valuable additions to their libraries, and added to the Monthly Meeting Libraries. To bring some reading matter more directly to individuals, tracts on different subjects were either published or purchased and supplied gratuitously to all who would accept. To accomplish this successfully many persons went from house to house offering them, and invariably found a welcome response. Mother Coffin, Elizabeth Brown and I, went with a supply to Eaton, the county seat of Preble County, Ohio, and visited all the families and distributed tracts. This, we learned from one of the ministers of the Methodist Church, was the beginning of a great revival of religious life in the town, bringing many to a knowledge of Christ.

We then visited Westville, Boston and Abington. We went twice to Centreville, the county seat of Wayne County, Indiana. The last time we went to Centreville, we found a man in the last stage of life, who said he had been praying for us and longed to see us, to tell us of the great light that had come into his soul as the result of our former visit. We went to a

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<sup>1</sup> The "Book and Tract Committee" was organized 5th month 30th, 1850.



## REMINISCENCES

county jail, a one-story building with no windows, no light excepting when the door was open. We were warned against going in as the inmates were "terribly hard." When we entered, it was so dark that we could not see anyone, until our eyes became accustomed to it. There were eleven men. No ventilation, seats or beds; nothing but the bare floor. They received us kindly, listened attentively and joined in the singing led by Elizabeth Ham, a sweet singer and a noble Christian woman. There was one man whom they called "Dan Rice," who, after we left, gave them my discourse almost word for word. This was sure evidence to the critics that our efforts were useless, but we were certain of one thing, that the message had entered his mind, and we believed that it would find an entrance into his soul. "The entrance of Thy word, it giveth light."

With Father Coffin I went several times over the same grounds, examining into the supply of Bibles and distributing them. We were members of the Bible Society. Father and Charles were life members of the American Bible Society. By these two organizations we were able to supply many destitute families.

About this time a "Reading Circle"<sup>2</sup> was formed at our house for the purpose of systematic reading of Biographical and Historical Works principally. Some other books were read. The "Circle" was composed largely of the younger Friends, John Nicholson and wife, Elwood Hadley and wife, Sister Rachel, and many

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<sup>2</sup> The reading Circle was organized December 24th, 1858.

## RHODA M. COFFIN

still younger. This was kept up for several years and the books were circulated amongst its members. The Circle afterwards met at different homes.

A Bible Class was formed later for the study of the Bible; this was also held at different houses. It was useful to all and was also continued for several years.

Soon after my marriage I was appointed a teacher in Friends' Sabbath School at Whitewater. My pupils were young women. I was illy prepared and often thought—"poor things, it must be most stupid," but they seemed to endure it patiently.

I was afterward given a class of small children of Friends, the parents of whom were interested in various classes of the school. They were little "duckies," sweet and attractive, but could not read, and I was utterly at sea to know what to do with them. I concluded to teach or talk to them as I did to my own boys at home and made a great success of it. I had ten girls who remained with me for eleven years, until they were all Christians, and then all taught classes. Others came and went, but these remained. Later Charles Henry was added, and Clayton Hunt's twins, Joshua and Benjamin, and one day Hulda Estes, a dear friend of mine, brought to me her youngest son, Rowland Estes, saying "Do take my boy; no one will have him. I can't find a place for the sole of his feet to rest upon. I must give up my class if thee don't take him; he is not at all interesting."

I took him into the class; he was a little fellow, well taught for his age, and I never had a more attentive

## REMINISCENCES

scholar, so loving and grateful. When he came to manhood he was a warm-hearted Christian gentleman. He was elected Superintendent of the Bible School, and one day sent for me and asked me to open his school with prayer. As he introduced me, he said "She took me in; she led me to Christ."

At one time I offered a reward of a nice Bible for the scholar who would learn the "Sermon on the Mount" by a certain time. I went to the school with the reward, and when all of them arose and repeated the whole sermon, word for word without any mistakes I was totally unprepared, but Father Coffin, who was Superintendent, aided me through the Bible Society to keep my promise.

Thus far I had never offered prayer outside of my family. Frequently when I went around on different missions of love, I felt I should pray, but returned home, feeling that I had failed to accomplish what I was shown should be done. It was an untried field of experience to me. The bonds of habit were strong. Prayer in those days, excepting silent prayer, was looked upon, and I was taught to consider it as an awful thing. This was contrary to my ideas of vocal prayer. Talking to my Heavenly Father—"an awful thing"—seemed absurd, but that feeling had somehow grown too generally in the Church.<sup>3</sup> I had been taught

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<sup>3</sup> In the fifty years or more that have elapsed since the times of which Mrs. Coffin here writes, there has been a great reaction in the practice of vocal prayer in the public assemblies of the Society of Friends.

## RHODA M. COFFIN

reverence for the Church, and it was hard to surmount the influences. Finally one day, while engaged in my household duties, the Spirit's call came pressing upon

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Prayer has, since the rise of the Society, been its distinctive principle and practice and considered indispensable. It has ever held faithfully in accord with St. Augustine's teaching: "Thou, Lord, has communicated thyself to all: Thou teachest the heart without words; Thou speakest to it without articulate sounds; and as a body has declared and believed in the constant communion with God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ whether uttered or unexpressed."

Though there was perfect liberty for all present to take part in their meetings for worship, there had in the long years grown a strange feeling of restraint from its public *vocal* utterance—except perhaps by the regularly appointed ministers—the conception being that to approach God the Father, the Infinite and Eternal, was an act of profound and deep reverence, almost beyond the imperfect and insufficient expression of human lips. The result was such an overawing sense of fear and humbleness that few of the younger members had the physical courage to encounter the duty. This spirit of awe expressed in the well-known lines of the self-abasing Watts:

"Before Jehovah's *awful* Throne"

prevailed in many parts of the Society.

The "Declaration of Faith" as given in the ruling "Book of Discipline of the New York Yearly Meeting" declares as follows:

"Without prayer there can be no acceptable worship. It is therefore incumbent upon all Christians, in their meetings especially, to seek after Divine help, to offer spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Vocal prayer uttered in response to the promptings of the Holy Spirit is an important part of public worship; and whenever God's people meet together in His name, they should reverently seek unto Him in united prayer. We would encourage parents and heads of families to be faithful in the exercise of this privilege before their children and households."

## REMINISCENCES

me with unusual force. I had prayed for power to do my whole duty as a loving service to my Father. I stopped, and putting on my wraps, went to the house where I felt I should go. The woman seemed very glad to see me. In a few moments I told her that I wished to read a short portion of God's word and offer prayer. "Most certainly," she said, "I shall be so glad to have you. I have been wishing some one would come and do so. I am not a Christian but I want to be one." She accepted Christ and became a very devoted Christian. I went home happy; I had learned my lesson.

In conversation with Father Coffin, with whom I could always talk, he said, "Daughter, follow the leading of the Spirit without regard to the past or the result in the future. It is ours to obey, and the results belong to the Lord." This I have carried out. He and I were appointed by the Bible Society to go from house to house inquiring as to the number of persons without a Bible. We found a large number of families without the Holy Scriptures; these we supplied. One family had never had a copy of the Bible or read it. They received it gladly, read it together evenings when they had spare time, and also to their friends when they came in. They were perfectly absorbed in the "Old, old story of Jesus and His love." The Lord gave his blessing upon the work.

As time advanced the population of Richmond grew, and with it poverty increased and the needs multiplied the avenues and opportunities for Christian work. Christian work! What is it? It embraces a large

## RHODA M. COFFIN

scope—the work of Christ. We are apt to look at it as entirely outside of ourselves. In reality it is an inward work of grace wrought in the heart by Christ, and changing the nature, purifying the affections and the desires, flowing out to the world in a pure life and bearing fruit for the people. The heart having been changed, the fruits are love toward God and toward man. Thus our lives, our words and our acts, call others “to come and see that the Lord is good,” resulting in ministry to the suffering, mentally, physically, spiritually and financially, amongst the rich and the poor, the high and the low, as the needs require and the ability is given, always in the sympathy, spirit, and patience which Christ so eminently showed forth in His life. In short to do as He did, to live as He lived. This is Christ-like work.

The relation of husband and wife is the most God-like relation that there is. No so-called Christian work should ever be allowed to interfere with the relation of or duties as husband and wife to each other and this is extended to the family relation, which is God-ordained, entered into by our own free will and choice. I say without hesitation that Christ never calls either man or woman to any service which would militate against the training or development of their children. But by proper system and arrangement of home and its duties, with an ear open to hear the voice of God, a heart full of love, and open to the needs of others, there are opportunities for living as Christ did for others, and a work may be carried on far more powerful,

## REMINISCENCES

more productive of good, than much of the so-called Christian work which is now being done. The ways and opportunities lie all along our path. It is "Whatsoever thy hands find to do"—a pleasant smile—a grasp of the hand, a cordial greeting.

One day there came to our door three little children. It was a cold, drizzling day, with snow on the ground. Their little toes were out and they were thinly clad. Some one had sent them to me. I went with them to their home and found great poverty, no food, no fire, and the mother ill with lung fever. They had been long fasting. She told me that one day she had been sorely tempted to take the lives of herself and children. Her husband, having gone into the war as a soldier, was killed, and she had struggled along until all was gone. I supplied their needs of food, clothing and fire, secured a physician and had her nursed. It was no time for teaching. The physical needs were too great. I went into that house with a bright, cheerful face when all this was done. The next day I sat down by the side of her bed and asked of her relation to God. She sweetly said, "Yesterday I gave my heart to God. It was your cheerful, bright face that won me to Him." All this was done without any neglect of duty at home. It only took a little time, a little self-denial and self-sacrifice.

One day in walking along in the sleet and rain, the sidewalks covered with ice, I passed a little boy carrying a basket of eggs. Just as I passed he fell; I stopped, picked up the eggs which had rolled away,

## RHODA M. COFFIN

wiped the tears off his face and then said, "Let me carry the basket, and give me your hand. I will help you along." He refused his basket, but took hold of my finger, too self-reliant to let me aid him. He was relying on his own strength and not on mine, and soon he fell again, this time breaking some of the eggs and hurting his knees. At last he yielded, gave me the basket, and taking my hand said, "Won't you please hold me tight, Madam?" Cheerily we chatted on the way, and by the time we reached his home all trace of grief was gone, and I was able to so fully explain as to save the boy punishment. It was only a little deed of kindness, but I had won the boy's heart, spared him unjust punishment, and learned for myself one of the sweetest lessons of life, viz., when in trouble and sorrow to look to Christ for help and yielding to Him fully, to commune with Him, and let *Him* help me. It has saved me many troubles.

In the retrospect of our lives I recognize that the entertainment of strangers and those engaged in religious work, has brought to us and to our children a rich fruitage. Our house was the home for many distinguished persons who came to Richmond. The influence of their lives upon us and upon our children was very great. Being thus brought in contact with men and women who had cultivated their higher natures, their larger experience and knowledge broadened our lives, expanded our thoughts, increased our powers, and thus prepared us for the work which was before us.



## V

“There is nothing like the Gospel for creating that excitement which most effectively breaks up the somnolent religious indifference that is too often a baneful accompaniment of rural seclusion.”—*London Christian*.

THE Society of Friends after many, many years of vitalizing active service, in which they bore a strong testimony for spiritual worship and against formalism, had, through this protesting against formalism in other churches, become very formal. While there were many able, conscientious Christians here and there, striving to serve the Lord in the way they thought right, the Church as a whole had lost much of its vitality. As is always the case, so was it now—strikingly so—while engaged in finding fault with what others were doing, criticising, judging and protesting, the life was sapped by a system of quenching and “thou shalt nots.” The younger people had no means of showing their love to God by any active service. They were required to use certain modes of dress and language, abstain from all relaxations and amusements; music and singing were prohibited. Even singing a hymn at home was very doubtful, not to be encouraged, an evidence of “creaturely activity” of which there was great fear. It was a narrow path, a “guarded

## RHODA M. COFFIN

education," but the guards were so strong and high that the breathing of the pure air of contact with other Christians was almost shut off. The pure flow of Christ-like thought was obstructed by repression. The religious instruction was not such as we now receive, the freedom to participate in any worship was not encouraged. There were many hungering and thirsting for the water of life, but few to give it. It was, however, soon to flow freely.

At the beginning of the Yearly Meeting of 1860 a company met at our house to consult as to what should be done, or rather what *could* be done. Father and Mother Coffin, Harriet Steer, John Henry Douglas and ourselves met in our library. We were joined by Murray Shipley and Dr. David Judkins, and after a season of prayer and consultation we decided to send a written request to the Yearly Meeting for the privilege of holding an evening meeting for sacred worship in the "Old" Whitewater Meeting House for those in the younger walks of life. This proposal met with much opposition, but was finally granted. It was the understanding that the recommended ministers should refrain from preaching, we fearing that the time would be monopolized by the ministers and our purpose frustrated. We were very curious about how many young people would attend and various estimates of the probable attendance were made. Few of us had sufficient faith in the power of God's Spirit and the fullness of God's love. We went early, after a season of prayer, and found that the Meeting House was filled with the

## REMINISCENCES

exception of a few empty seats in the gallery. It was estimated that a thousand persons were present.<sup>1</sup>

The solemnity of the Meeting could only be *felt*—it could not be written; there was no form, no leader. The young people were told the purpose of the Meeting and that it was theirs. Murray Shipley, Dr. David Judkins, Charles and myself spoke for the first time publicly, avowing our allegiance to Christ. When we were arranging for the Meeting, I knew that it would be my privilege to own my Lord, and publicly to enlist in His service. When I declared that I was on the Lord's side, that I was His, and He was my Saviour; and repeated the text, "Let others do as they may, I will serve the Lord," I was loosed and set free, and I came out of that Meeting with a heart full of love to God, and a spirit to *do* His will.

Hundreds gave their first testimony for Christ or offered their first public prayer. There was no confusion, no haste, no urging or calling on anyone to speak. The Lord was working with great power, and when the Meeting closed, we were all astonished when told that it was 1.30 o'clock in the morning.

After the Yearly Meeting closed, Sybil Jones, a minister from Maine who was present at the young people's meeting, had a wish to see those who had taken a part. We invited them to our house and on the next Sabbath evening, one hundred and fifty came.

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<sup>1</sup> This remarkable meeting was held on the 7th of October, 1860. Elijah Coffin records in his journal that there were "not less than two thousand present, a memorable time."

## RHODA M. COFFIN

Our drawing-room, library, and hall were filled. It was a most interesting meeting. We invited them all to come again on each Sabbath evening, and for more than four years our home was opened every week and large numbers attended. The Meetings proved a great blessing not only to us and those who were with us, but throughout the Society of Friends. It may seem strange that there should have been anything but great rejoicing at these Meetings, but such was not the case. Many honest good people felt that it was contrary to discipline to hold a meeting without the sanction of the Church. We met with much opposition from the Church Officials which gave many of our valued friends much cause for uneasiness.

Individual liberty to worship God in our own house, without let or hindrance, was a right established in England, and fought for by our Early Friends. It was a "Common Law" that a "Man's house was his Castle," not to be interfered with, or his acts therein. It was that law which caused our Early Friends to put a family in every meeting house, and there their persecutors could not reach them. Many of the Friends' Meeting Houses have a family now living in them. It was this right or freedom of worship for which we were contending. Many Friends came to see us to persuade us to give up the Prayer Meeting, but all who attended advised us to continue. The difference was an unpleasant one, but "victory perched upon our banners." During the Yearly Meeting in 1861, previous to our

## REMINISCENCES

Father Coffin's death, although very feeble, he felt he had a message for that body. He was taken to the Meeting House and made a most earnest plea for the liberty of holding Prayer Meetings. All who heard him felt that it was his dying effort, and as he stood before them so feeble and emaciated, and pleaded so earnestly, he won every heart. His address was incorporated in the "Minute on the State of Society," which as usual was sent to all of the subordinate Meetings.

This Prayer Meeting was the first one of which we have any knowledge of having been *regularly* held among Friends. Very soon they were started in other Meetings and are now almost universal. Out of this Prayer Meeting grew what is now known as "Eighth Street Friends' Meeting in Richmond," the result of that wonderful Meeting in the Autumn of 1860. The Spirit of God was working amongst the people. There were many Friends who did not unite with us, some of them were our dearest friends. It was most painful to wound them, and at one time so great was the opposition and so severe the pressure, that after a night of suffering near the break of day, I fell asleep and dreamed a dream that was of great comfort. I dreamed that I was standing on the west side of our house near a window, looking at a coming storm. The cloud was exceedingly black and fearful to see. I could see the forked lightning, and hear the wind in its fury, and when strangely impressed that there was great danger, in my dream I fell upon my knees and in great

## RHODA M. COFFIN

fear called upon God to deliver me. Immediately in the west there arose a form like unto a man glorious to look upon and with outstretched hands parted the clouds asunder and there burst forth the clear shining of the sun. I awoke, I had been asleep but a few minutes; but with peace and quiet confidence in my soul, and the impression strongly upon my mind that the dream had been given to strengthen and comfort me. At any rate such was the result.

The results of the Prayer Meeting followed by other work extended widely to the Society of Friends, and carried progressive development of life and interest throughout all of the organizations of the Society. The manifestations and degrees of vitality were more or less varied in the separate localities.

About this time Mrs. Coffin frequently addressed the public meetings for worship, speaking in a quiet unaffected manner and in a natural tone of voice. In the year 1867 the Monthly Business Meeting "acknowledged her gift of ministry," and placed her on record, a Minister of the Gospel. From that time onward she preached the Gospel in many parts of the United States, in England, on the Continent, and in the Orient.

In Richmond, of those who had received the command, "Let your lights so shine," and joyfully accepted the commission, it resulted in the establishment

## REMINISCENCES

of a new meeting<sup>2</sup> for worship and Preparative of like-spirit.

A vacant church building was rented and all with one accord and one mind joined in the work. The Prayer Meeting, which for four years had met at our house, still continued, and in 1864 was attached to the regular Meeting and became a part of it. In these Meetings there was the greatest freedom and liberty of action, "to do what our hands found to do"—Sabbath Schools, Bible Classes, Reading Circles which met at different homes, Tracts and Tract Readings, Cottage Prayer Meetings, etc. The missionary spirit was soon apparent: our Friends desired that the Gospel should be carried to those who sat in darkness. Louis and Sarah Street, members of our Meeting, felt called

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<sup>2</sup> The name of this meeting is now "South Eighth Street Monthly Meeting." [1910.]

The Richmond Preparative Meeting was organized in the First month of 1865. It was an offshoot of a prayer meeting, commenced in a private house, that of Charles F. Coffin, in the year 1860, which was probably the first meeting for that specific object among Friends. The meeting-house at the corner of Sixth and South B streets, now occupied by the A. M. E. Church, was used for nearly three years. The ground for the present house, on Eighth street, was bought at once, and the building completed and occupied in 1867. It is a generally conceded fact, that this meeting was in the van of the *great evangelistic movement* that has so changed the aims and methods in Friends' Church during the last twenty-five years. It was in the prayer-meeting of this church that the *memorable revival of 1869* commenced. It was one of the first, if not the very first, of such meetings among latter-day Friends. The meetings were largely attended, the house being frequently filled. Many persons (about 400) were brought to accept Christ as their Saviour—among them

## RHODA M. COFFIN

upon to go to Madagascar where they labored most successfully for twelve years. This was like the leaven. The influence was felt and resulted in many others going out in different directions, in different places, and finally in the establishment of the Foreign Mission work in which American Friends are now engaged.<sup>3</sup>

Prayer was offered night and day for direction, for guidance in the spiritual upheaval which soon followed.

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some of the most active and useful members of the church at this time. From "The Annual Visitor," 1890.

In seventh month, 1866, the heirs of Elijah Coffin presented to this meeting 201 volumes of Friends' books for a library.

<sup>3</sup> There followed a general sacred impulse towards Missionary work. The "Friends' Foreign Missionary Association" was organized in the year 1871. Within the short period of three years, eight missionaries had entered foreign mission fields, and were encountering every difficulty that new conditions brought in the unfamiliar language and environments. The Third Annual Report of the Association dated "10th month, 5th, 1874," states that Louis and Sarah Street were then on their way to Madagascar; Micajah C. Binford and his wife had gone "12th month, 1873," to Matimoras, Mexico; Samuel Purdie and his wife Gulielma M. Purdie, were "efficiently laboring in another Mexican field;" and Elkanah and Irene Beard were actively engaged in a broad mission field.

The Association united in asking Indiana Yearly Meeting to adopt the work as one of its permanent branches of evangelizing labor. The proposition met with cordial favor and the foreign work was put in charge of a Standing Committee the members of which had been active in founding the organization.

The names of the committee were: Charles F. Coffin, Francis W. Thomas, Micajah C. Binford, Elkanah Beard, Murray Shipley, Elizabeth B. Hopkins, Rhoda M. Coffin, Mary J. Taylor, Harriet Steer, and Irene Beard.

See the historical paper "Rise of Foreign Missions among Friends," page 221.



## REMINISCENCES

The Prayer Meeting became the center of great activities. A great revival came upon us. For six months this Church was the recipient of great grace, hundreds were brought to a full acceptance of new life. Three hundred and seventy-five were added to the Church. The revival spread all over the city. It was a time of great favor from the Lord. This Church is still a strong power.<sup>4</sup> Many who were then converted are now its strongest workers. It is impossible to give any accurate idea of the result of that blessing.

We had many strong Friends who advocated freedom of action. Father and Mother Coffin from the beginning sustained us by their presence and prayers—Joseph and Esther Dickinson, Samuel F. Fletcher and Elizabeth, and many others. Many young people faithful and true to a place where they had found the way of life, followed out the results of the Prayer Meeting. Among the older Friends were Elizabeth Ham, a woman of unusual strength of character, a very spiritually minded woman, and an intimate friend with whom I was afterwards closely associated in philanthropic work. James and Sarah J. Smith, he a quiet, steadfast Friend with good judgment, she one of the noblest of women possessing much ability, a minister, very strong in prayer and in spiritual life. I was very closely associated with her in many kinds of Christian and benevolent work. I went with her afterwards on a religious visit to the members of Chicago Meeting. We visited

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<sup>4</sup> 1910.

## RHODA M. COFFIN

all of the families of Friends and the public institutions in that city with interest to ourselves and I trust profit to all. We went to the Cook County Jail and had a meeting with the prisoners. This was the first time I had ever seen a murderer and there went through me a thrill of horror. The man had killed his wife. He listened closely and seemed touched. In the women's department we met with a murderess who had killed her paramour. Sarah Smith's conversation and prayer with this woman were the most touching I ever listened to. An account of it was written for a Friends' paper edited by Eli and Mahala Jay.

When Charles and a few Friends with him were working to get a bill through the Indiana State Legislature for the establishment of a Reformed School for Boys, I went with him to Indianapolis. We took a room at the "Bates House," the Republican Headquarters, and I spent my time in the hotel lobbying for the bill, which was carried and passed in 1867. The school eventually was established. Charles was made President of the Board of Managers, and for several years he put much of his energy and strength into that cause. It became a most successful institution.

While at Indianapolis a number of the citizens called upon me, among whom were James Ray and Stoughton Fletcher, Junr., both of whom were afterwards active in establishing the Women's Reformatory, to consult as to the founding a Home for Friendless Women and Girls in that city, and the possibility of having me to arrange it for them. This I declined, but recommended

## REMINISCENCES

them to secure the services of Sarah J. Smith, who with her husband resided near Milton, Wayne County, Ind. I knew she was very competent to organize and put the institution into working order. This resulted in her permanent employment. This was the beginning of Sarah Smith's work of that character; she met with great success and remained with the Home until she left it for the larger work, "A State Reformatory for Women and Girls."



## VI

“Beautiful hands are those that do  
Work that is earnest and brave and true,  
Moment by moment the long day through.”

—*E. P. Allerton.*

ON the 28th of October, 1871, we left our home for a journey abroad to be absent several months. Our son Elijah was married and residing in his own home, Charles Henry had charge of the business, William Edward was at Providence Boarding School, Percival Brooks, our youngest son, was left in the care of our sister, Caroline E. Ladd, in Brooklyn, N. Y., who kindly offered to care for him. He was too young to take with us, and we were most fortunate in so good a caretaker. Our son Francis went with us, a most enjoyable companion. We had a stormy passage. The approach to Ireland was beautiful. On landing we were met with an invitation to Ebenezer Pike's of Cork. He was absent from home, but his lovely wife with her interesting family were most cordial. It was our first experience in Irish life. We were detained at Cork and on Spike's Island, inspecting the prison system, and it was quite late when we arrived. It was pouring rain. They had given us up and were at dinner, but we soon felt quite at ease, and entered on our work of inspecting prisons, houses of refuge, and attending some of the Meetings.

## RHODA M. COFFIN

We spent three days thus, then to see Blarney Castle and the Lakes of Killarney, all and everything so new. We were pleased with the cheery appearance and green grass. Many of the peasantry lived in little huts, some with the pig and baby most friendly, others with the cow partaking of the warm hospitality or faithful old hens brooding over the eggs which they were very certain would bring forth a lively brood, whilst the muck heap was at the door of the windowless cottage.

We went on to Dublin, where we were most warmly welcomed by Samuel Bewley, whom we had entertained at our home, and his lovely family. Many friends called to see us and invited us to their homes to partake of their genuine hospitality. We mingled with them in their Mission Work, and held services as way opened. We then crossed the Channel to Chester, an old walled town, the first we had seen, and which was intensely interesting to us. We spent the day in Chester going around the walls and to the ancient historic places. In the evening we left for Leominster, accepting an invitation from Henry Stanley Newman and his dear wife and their lovely family. Here we remained several days. We addressed several meetings and were made a blessing to some. We then went to Wales. A great revival had been going on for months at Newport in which all church or class distinctions had vanished before the Mighty Spirit of God, all denominations joining together, the ministers of each denomination taking turns in conducting the meetings. One Friend, rather a prominent man, was actively engaged in the

## REMINISCENCES

work and had invited us to take the "Friends" evening, as we had just come from the great revival at Richmond, Indiana. English Friends were not as yet, they thought, equal to it. The meeting was very large and that evening there was a wonderful manifestation of God's loving power. Many accepted Christ. It was 11 P. M. when the meeting was closed. At their earnest request we appointed a meeting at eight the next morning. We returned to Alfred Bland's, whose guests we were. A large number had preceded us, and we all sat down to an English supper at twelve o'clock midnight, and arose from the table at two o'clock A. M.—two hours later—having had a *real* Lord's Supper. We arose next morning in time for the early morning meeting, which proved a most interesting occasion.

I afterwards received a letter from a vicar of the Church of England, thanking me for the great blessing I had been to him and to his curate, and saying that he had thought it right to make a public acknowledgment of it on Sunday, stating that it was through a woman's ministry in the pulpit he was greatly blessed.

From Newport we went to Bristol and were the guests of two lovely Friends, Robert and Catherine Charlton, persons of great benevolence and prominent in the Society of Friends. We found some of the young Friends engaged in a large Mission work, with much opposition among some Friends of their Meeting. Having been engaged in work of the same character we felt it right to mingle with and help them, although advised by some not to do so.

## RHODA M. COFFIN

Eventually it proved to be the right course, and did much good by awakening an interest amongst many for the young people. We afterwards received an earnest invitation from many Friends to return and hold a series of Meetings in their Mission work.

After a few days spent in Bristol, visiting the prisons, houses of bad repute, jails, etc., and objects of historic interest, we went to London where we found much the same state of things, many Friends much troubled, sincerely so, over the large missionary work going on in the city, as it was out of the regular course of the Society, and many found it hard to be reconciled to the innovations; amongst these we had some influence.

We had received while in Bristol an invitation to a reception given by William Fowler and his newly married wife, to the Christian workers, at their country home.

The company arranged to go in an omnibus. It was dark when they called for us. We were entire strangers to all, having been introduced to but few. It was a novel experience, being crowded in the vehicle and dark, we had no knowledge of whom we were with.

The company cared for us the best that was possible. There sat by my side a young woman who entered into conversation with me upon her own personal experience of a spiritual character. I did not know at all who she was. Twenty years afterwards we were in London attending a Meeting of the "Home Mission Association of Christian Workers" when my husband in his remarks alluded to that evening. His remarks



## REMINISCENCES

were published in "The London Friend," a copy of which reached Friends' Mission in Chung-Kung, China. A few months afterwards I received a letter from Mary J. Davidson stating that she had longed to write to me because of the great blessing I once was to her; that she was the young woman who sat by my side that evening in the omnibus, and my conversation had changed the whole line of her life, and caused her to go to that part of China as a Missionary, and told of the good she was doing. She said I was to receive a part of the reward, and explained that she had not known where I was nor how to reach me until she saw the notice of the Mission meeting, and our presence in London. It has made me very grateful to know the influence I unconsciously exerted that night was productive of such results. We have corresponded occasionally since, she being still engaged in the same Mission which is most successful in its results.

We found a very open door amongst Friends in England and received much kindness in many of their homes, and met with many opportunities for preaching the Gospel. We were surprised to find the prison doors closed to any service by their own people. Through William Tallack, Sir Walter Crofton became interested in our Mission and with his influence and the official documents given to us by our own Government with the noble seal upon it, we had access to all of the prisons, and made a pretty thorough investigation of the system, but saw but little to commend. The discipline was very severe. The Sir Walter Crofton system had

## RHODA M. COFFIN

much to commend it, nine months of solitary confinement. If the conduct of the prisoners was good they were transferred to the congregated System, and by merit were finally transferred to the open System where they were given much trust and liberty and from this they were set free.

We extended our visit to much of the Continent, then travelled by way of Alexandria, Cairo and the Isthmus of Suez to Port Said, and there sailed for Joppa where we arrived after a stormy night early in the morning of March 3, 1872. We anchored and were transferred to small rowboats by jumping off the deck into the arms of the boatman, a good strong man, and were conveyed as far as they could safely take us, and then were carried on their backs pick-a-pack to the landing. Here we found a moderately comfortable hotel, and after exploring the town pretty thoroughly, we started with a party of seven, under the care of our dragoman, a faithful man, on our journey on horseback, provided with tents, interpreter, cook, waiter and luggage. The journey was thrilling with the memories so sacred of the ages that had passed. We were six weeks in the Holy Land, rode six hundred and ninety-three miles on horseback, passed through Ramah, Jabez, Gilead, to Jerusalem, Hebron, Bethlehem, Bethany, to the Dead Sea and the River Jordan, to Jericho, Samaria and all the sites of the old cities, Bethel, Nazareth, Mt. Carmel, Haifa, Tyre, and over the mountains to the head of the Jordan. Then we passed over Mt. Hermon, striking the rivers of Abana and Pharphar and on down their

## REMINISCENCES

valleys, through a rich, fertile country to Damascus. Here we spent several days, and then on to Baalbeck, the wonderful ruins, then over the Mountains of Lebanon to Beirut. From Beirut by boat we passed Rhodes, Smyrna, Cyprus and Ephesus, along the Pauline route through the Sea of Marmora to Constantinople, stopping at each place. After spending a few days and doing much sightseeing, we sailed down the Bosphorus and the Black Sea to Varna, where we took a train to Rusrstuck, then by boat up the Danube, a very beautiful river, through the Iron Gates amid beautiful scenery, through Orsovia, the boundary line between Hungary and Roumania, then to Bazius. We took breakfast at Pesth, the capital of Hungary, and went by rail through a beautiful agricultural country to Vienna, a beautiful city. After seeing this city and visiting some of the leading Government prisons, we left for Berlin, inspected the leading prison systems there, and went via Dresden to Hamburg. We had parted from the young lady companions who were with us much of our journey, and two young men, who left us for Paris. After visiting the reformatories, prisons, etc., at Hamburg, we went to Frankfurt and from there to Stuttgart where we left our dear son Francis, who remained to pursue his education. From Stuttgart we went by Shaffhausen, a place of beautiful scenery, then passed through Zürich, Lucerne, and other parts of Switzerland, stopping at a number of interesting places. We took supper at a town in Belgium and visited Louvaine, one of the most interesting prisons we had visited.

## RHODA M. COFFIN

While travelling we visited and inspected some of the prisons in Italy and Austria and saw nothing to commend, but in Belgium at Louvaine, we witnessed a system which apparently had many valuable features. They had "The Separate System." Each prisoner had a separate cell and a small ground for exercise. None but the officers who receive them ever see their faces. They are given a mask which conceals the face, and no officer may enter their cell without giving notice of his approach, when the mask is pulled down. They each receive five visits a day by persons who are appointed for that purpose, whose duty it is to converse with them. They have no communication from any one else. They may enter under an assumed name. The purpose is that no one may be able to recognize them when they are liberated from prison, and thus they be hindered from starting life afresh. They may gain much abatement on their sentence by good conduct. The system had more points of excellence than any we saw.

Our visit to the different prisons was profitable in so much that we saw some points which we were able afterward to see adopted in some of the prisons in our own country.

After Louvaine we went to Amsterdam where we made a halt for a few days. We reached London very tired. We spent about two months in England attending the Yearly Meeting, visiting some of the large meetings, prisons, etc. We reached home in the early part of July [1872], thankful for the privileges which

## REMINISCENCES

had been given us and that our loved ones were all preserved to us.

Mrs. Coffin's paper, "The Women of the Orient," beginning on page 247 of this book, gives additional and interesting information of her observations.



## VII

He acknowledged him in his blessing, and gave him an heritage.—*Ecclesiasticus*, XLIV, 23.

THE inherent power of a mother's love kept open the eyes of Mrs. Coffin upon her sons in whom she ever exercised a generous faith. She took much pride and pleasure in the practical energy and bright intelligence of her children, who in turn as they reached the years of manhood, were uniformly subordinate to her wishes and gave her their hearty, devoted, considerate attentions, which yielded her unqualified satisfaction.

Her sentiments of affectionate attachment perhaps moved her heart to write with exceptional freedom of the inner relations of the family.

As this work is printed for private circulation only, the reader, as he turns its pages, will be indulgent and easily forgive her—for she was their mother.

Our little family grew more and more absorbing in interest. The children were active, bright and talented and required much careful training. Ours was a lovely family. There were many persons whose influence over our children was most helpful. When Elijah, our old-

## RHODA M. COFFIN

est son, was about twenty years of age, we sent him to Haverford College near Philadelphia, a Friends' College, where he remained several years, very creditably, but broke down in health before he was graduated, and returned home.

Charles Henry's health failed while attending Friends' School at Richmond, Indiana, taught by Hiram Hadley. This son was bright, learned with great ease, and we had no thought of the pressure. His teacher was very proud of his advancement, and ambitiously, but kindly, pushed him too far. He was about eleven years old when he became paralyzed in his lower limbs and lost the use of them. We were greatly troubled and sought advice from every quarter. Nothing could arouse him and we decided to take him to New York for treatment. We carried him by railway train at night to Niagara Falls. After several efforts which proved of no avail we employed a strong negro to carry him under the Falls. This aroused him up to life and interest. We took him by night to Albany and then down the Hudson River by boat. We failed to find a physician in New York who gave us hope, and then we went to Philadelphia to Dr. Theophilus Beasley, a Friend physician, he and his lovely wife being very dear friends of ours. We were the guests of our dear friends, John and Mary Whitall and their married children, Robert Pearsall and Hannah Whitall Smith, Dr. James Carey Thomas, and their families.

After exhausting the medical aid at Philadelphia, we spent several weeks most delightfully with these





CHARLES F. COFFIN AND RHODA M. COFFIN

From a photograph taken about 1905 in the library of  
their home in Chicago



## REMINISCENCES

friends at Atlantic City, staying with them and our friend, Eliza P. Gurney. All of them were exceedingly kind. We fortunately heard of the Swedish Movement cure and returned to New York City, and after consultation with Dr. Charles Fayette Taylor, one of the leading physicians in that school, who gave us hope, we decided to try the treatment and most successful it was. We were there many months; neither of us could be spared from our son continuously; we therefore took turns in giving him attention and finally rejoiced in his full restoration. Dr. Charles Fayette Taylor was an exceedingly interesting man and to him we have always felt most grateful. During those months we met with many interesting persons and formed some delightful attachments.

Francis Albion was in school at Earlham and finished his education at Stuttgart, Germany, where he stayed some time to perfect himself in the language. He was taught by Mrs. Mulberger, and returned to us a good scholar in French and German, both of which he spoke fluently.

William Edward was sent to Friends' Boarding School at Providence, where he was successfully passing through the course of study, when he was taken ill with typhoid fever. After the severe attack, as soon as he was able he was taken home. For months he was a sufferer; he was not able to read. The physicians insisted that his mind should be kept actively engaged with something bright and amusing, and prescribed Artemus Ward's Works. I read them all to

## RHODA M. COFFIN

him and many a laugh we had. As he grew stronger we took Mark Twain and anything else that would keep his mind interested and active without effort. We read "Livingstone's Africa," and Stanley's "How I Found Livingstone," thus leading him on to stronger mental food. After some time he recovered, and entered the bank as messenger. None of the sons were able to return to school again, and we were obliged to give up our cherished idea of a thorough college education as had been our purpose.

The four sons, all so near together, required much care, but they were a great delight and have always been a great comfort to us.

Our children were taught their dependence upon God and to pray as soon as they could lisp the name Mother.

Mary Amelia was born August 3, 1858. She was a religious child; she talked to her dolls of Jesus. On one occasion her brother, William Edward, of whom she was very fond, had done something for which I sent him to my room. She was greatly distressed and begged to go and see if he would be a good boy. To this I consented and soon I heard her asking Jesus to make him a good boy. As the door was ajar I peeped in, and they were kneeling with arms around each other praying. They came out smiling holding each other's hands. She said, "Now, mamma, he is sorry. Jesus make him good, Jesus 'gib <sup>1</sup> him,' mamma, please 'gib' him."

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<sup>1</sup> "Forgive him."

## REMINISCENCES

Though so very young she seemed to grasp the idea of God as her Father, of her accountability to him, and of a Saviour's love. She would listen with rapture to that "sweet story of old, when Jesus was here among men," when He took little children in His arms and blessed them, and would repeat with accuracy, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." Before I had thought her old enough to be taught to pray on seeing her little brother kneeling in prayer, she asked to join him, and ever after it was her practice before getting into her bed, in childlike simplicity to offer her little prayer.

Her mind appeared to love to dwell on Heaven. As she went to bed the evening before her death, apparently perfectly well, she prayed to God to make her a good girl and take her to live with Jesus "right soon." She was seized with a convulsion the next day and her prayer was answered—she was taken home. It was a *great* trial. Many of our Friends came to mingle their tears with ours. Our prayers were heard and grace was given to say, "Thy will be done." She died May 17, 1862.

Our memories of this engaging child, Mary Amelia, will never entirely fail of wandering back with sweet recollections of her short earth-life. She was an unusually precocious child, original in her ways, full of natural affection, kindly tempered, plump and attractive in her

## RHODA M. COFFIN

fair healthful beauty. For her there seemed every hopeful promise of a bright and useful womanhood. We recall the deep shadow that memorable Sabbath she was snatched away with an illness lasting but a few brief hours.

“And he asked, who gathered this flower?  
And the gardener answered, The Master!  
And his fellow-servant held his peace.”<sup>2</sup>

On April 25, 1865, our joys as well as our cares were increased by the birth of our sixth child, Percival Brooks. He was much younger than his brothers. He was a wee little babe. I had been very ill for months and at his birth the physicians thought he could not live and laid him aside to care for me. My aunt, Elizabeth Johnson, who was the mother of eleven children—came in and taking him up, said, “*I* will bring him through.” She carried him upstairs and with a knowledge of what was needful, she *did* bring him through and always said he was her boy.

Anna Galvin, who had previously lived with us as a maid, hearing that my nurse had gone, came to my assistance. She had left me to keep house for her brother, but seeing my feeble health and that the babe was so delicate, she returned and cared for us most faithfully. She had the entire care of the baby, as I was several months recovering my health. She was devotedly attached to the child, and he became a vigorous, fat, little “roly-poly.” Her brother finally closed

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<sup>2</sup> From a tombstone in Burdock Churchyard, England.

## REMINISCENCES

his house and released her to remain with me, and she has lived with us ever since (1909). I assured her while I had a home it would be hers as she chose, and so she has remained with us forty-five years, and proved a most noble, self-sacrificing, conscientious, true helper. I want to leave a testimony of our love for her, for her worth and devotion to us and to our family. She has been with us through many sorrows, through sickness and death, through losses and crosses, always true, sympathetic, loving and tender. When circumstances arose which made a change of residence necessary and we decided to move to Chicago, I knew it would be separating her from her own family living at Richmond. Largely, owing to the expense, I told her she was free to go where she liked; she replied, "I want to stay with you, I will go with you anywhere, to the end of the earth." I trust, should she outlive us, that our dear children will see that she is well cared for.

With Percival Brooks, I adopted a different course of training. I had tried to faithfully train our children, as I thought in accord with the teachings of the Bible, but I became convinced that whipping as a punishment was not the best way to develop a child, and that the tendency was to harden both the parents and the child, that "He that spareth the rod, spoiled the child," did not mean the sparing of whipping, but to enforce the necessity of discipline, keeping the child under paternal government and control as well as teaching the child the habit of obedience to parents and those who must control. Also the habit of self-

## RHODA M. COFFIN

restraint, controlling the temper, appetite and passion, the proper use of all the faculties, and the resistance of abuse of any kind, how to develop all that is noble and true, and to keep the child well in hand. I came to believe that the development could be more successfully cultivated under the sunshine of love, than the cloud of fear. To this youngest child we gave a wealth of love, he was cradled in love and developed in love. I never punished him, but took the time from everything else when he needed discipline to patiently show the cause and the result, to teach him how to overcome it, to implant the principle, and help him apply it. The result was most satisfactory and the corroding and anxious care lessened. He was never sent to school, but was taught at home by private instructors. I taught him, as I had all of the others, the primaries, spelling, reading, writing, arithmetic and geography. When we went abroad in the Autumn of 1871 for nine months, we left him at Brooklyn, N. Y., with his aunt, Caroline E. Ladd, who cared for him most tenderly and lovingly. On our return, taking up the work of teaching him, it was discovered that his eyes were badly affected and troubled with unequal vision. The eyes had been strained, thereby necessitating eyeglasses, and total cessation from their use in reading or study. We secured Mary Frankland, sister of Benjamin Frankland, as governess, who taught him for the most part orally for several years until his eyes became strong enough for moderate use. She



## REMINISCENCES

was most faithful and laid a good foundation for his future. My cousin, Amy E. Johnson, who was an excellent teacher, but engaged in a larger field, taught him for several months until we could get one who was qualified in every way. We were most favored in the acquisition of Mrs. Daniel Dennis, a lovely, painstaking teacher with remarkable ability for teaching, cultured mind and conscientious in her work. She carefully taught him how to think, to reason, and to use his mind and develop its powers.

Dr. Dougan Clark was most successful as his tutor in his college course. The course we had taken in our son's education was entirely at variance with Dr. Clark's conception of the proper way of educating a boy. He was a college professor, and thought there was no other method. He watched his pupil's development with great interest and in the end was forced to acknowledge that he had never had a so enthusiastic, painstaking student, or a mind better trained.

We always read with our children of evenings in a systematic way which I regard as having been very beneficial to us all, keeping us in touch with their studies and in line of thought together.

The care and training of our children was an interesting privilege, a period I look back to with much pleasure. They early accepted Christ as a Saviour. They gave us reverence and love, and were most devoted and self-sacrificing. Nothing was too good nor great to do for us. They were full of life and energy, enthusiastic and aspiring. It was most interesting to

## RHODA M. COFFIN

watch their progress, and rightly to govern them was a great responsibility.

I am greatly comforted in the knowledge that they have developed into men of ability, courageous, conscientious Christian men. They have passed through many severe trials and are still meeting them with steadfastness of faith and courage. They have gone steadily on, are devoted to each other, bearing one another's burdens and trials and difficulties which they have unitedly met and overcome, which has bound them closely together. They have been and *are* our companions and counsellors. Praise be the Lord who has given us such blessings.

In the choice of their wives they have brought to us five loving daughters who were taken to our hearts and given a parent's love, and to us a daughter's love beautifully returned. I thought as my sons grew to manhood that I could never endure to be transplanted by another in their affections. It was a weak thought, one shared by many mothers. It vanished never to return.

It was a great pleasure when in 1869, Elijah chose Sarah Elma Fletcher for his wife; she was a young woman of whom I was very fond, and with whom I was closely associated. It was very sweet to take her into our hearts and home as a daughter—I realized she could do more for him than I could do. During these intervening years the close fellowship, the intimate relations have grown with a deeper love. She has been a most devoted, loving daughter. Their home was near

## REMINISCENCES

us and continued for a few years until the time came that our paths must separate on their removal elsewhere.

The marriage of Charles Henry, our second son, to Flora Howells, daughter of Dr. Joseph Howells, was a most welcome choice to us. She came with a warm, loving heart and was received as a daughter, and in the years that have passed she never failed in her devotion and love.

It was but a few years later that Francis Albion brought to our hearts and home Flora Roberts, daughter of John and Mary Roberts, of Indianapolis, Indiana. She was a young woman well chosen, just fitted for him and for us, one whom we soon learned to love with full hearts. She was always ready to make any sacrifice or do anything for us, and most nobly has stood by her husband through many fiery trials. They were married in the Episcopal Church in Richmond, Indiana, at five o'clock in the afternoon, September 15, 1875. On the same afternoon at six o'clock, William Edward, our fourth son, was married to Lydia Roberts, sister of Flora's, in the Eighth Street Meeting of Friends in Richmond, each couple attending the other at the marriage ceremonies. Thus we had "twin daughters," as a Friend observed in her congratulations. She remarked that she had heard me say, "I had always wanted twin daughters, and she thought our Heavenly Father had been very good to me, to give me a pair already brought up." We felt these to be a great blessing to us. Our fourth daughter

## RHODA M. COFFIN

found warm hearts and a special niche to fill, for which she was just fitted. She was loving, kind and thoughtful. Her love toward us has been most striking, never growing cold.

In the year 1887 our son Percival Brooks increased our joy by his marriage to Lucy Vincent Baxter, daughter of William and Mary Baxter, of Richmond, Indiana, a young woman of bright promise, of similar training and habit of thought as our son. They had been intimate friends from childhood. She was most cordially received and embraced in the family circle, and through years of sorrow and joy, she has entwined herself more and more into our affection. We are united as one family, living together in the same home, and have enjoyed the sweet ministrations and evidences of her love; thus our lives have been so blessed that our hearts are full of praise.

In 1870, Elijah's son Charles Francis was born, a most welcome child; all of us hailed his coming with great delight. He was but a few years younger than Percival Brooks, and they were close companions. He seemed like one of our own. As they lived next door we saw much of him and became strongly attached to him. He has grown to be a young man of fine appearance and correct life and a good business man. To his delight in 1878, his sister, Elizabeth Coffin, was sent to the household to cheer and shine as a sunbeam; a great pleasure she has been to us.

To Charles Henry and Flora nine children have been given. Their eldest, Julius Howells, born 1875, re-

## REMINISCENCES

mained with them eighteen years. He was an earnest Christian, very conscientious and of strong moral principle. Nothing could swerve him from what he considered his duty and to do right. He was very delicate in health and loved to come and stay with us because our home was quiet. He called our home his "paradise," for with so many little ones, the noise in his own home sometimes disturbed him. He was taken from us to his heavenly home in 1893. His brother, Murray Howells, who was born in 1880, died 1881, and his sister Miriam, born 1892, died ——. Virginia died in infancy, 1890. They are all beckoning us on to meet them in the eternal home.

Rhoda,—Charles Henry and Flora's eldest daughter, —and the first granddaughter in the family circle, was born June 11, 1877. We were especially delighted to welcome her, as the children thus far of the second generation, had all been sons. Ruth came next, born 1878, Charles Howells, 1882, then Flora, born 1885, a sweet, lovely girl, and Francis Joseph Howells, born 1889, who remained to cheer and brighten the home life, all loving children full of promise.

Ruth Howells, their second daughter, married Kreigh Collins, the son of Isaac Collins, of Chicago. Their little daughter, named Rhoda Coffin Collins, born May 15, 1899, is a sweet little girl. A second daughter, called Ruth Miriam, was born November 28, 1906. These are lovely children and a great pleasure to us.

The following was written by Mrs. Coffin five years later than the last record:

## RHODA M. COFFIN

Since writing the above our dear daughter, Flora Howells Coffin, the wife of Charles Henry, and the mother of the above family, has been gathered home to eternal peace and joy, a great loss to our family, and to her own family irreparable. Twenty-nine years she was permitted to be with us and the tendrils of her heart sank deep into ours. She was a noble woman, beloved by many, and to us was a loving daughter. Her place leaves a *great* blank. After months of intense suffering, which she bravely met, she was taken home to be "forever with the Lord."

Mrs. Flora Howells Coffin was a woman worthy in deed to be remembered. She was born in Urbana, Ohio, February 2d, 1852, and married Charles Henry Coffin, December 10th, 1873. She died at their winter home, Pass Christian, Mississippi, April 13th, 1902, and was interred two days later at Oakwood Cemetery, Chicago.

As she grew to womanhood she grasped the beautiful and spiritual principles and doctrines of the Church of Swedenborg, and as long as she lived, she entertained high ethical views of the relation we bear in this life to the spiritual realm. This belief influenced to a marked degree her daily living and led her to lofty ideals and attainment of domestic affection, and the dignity of life in the home. Her heart gave vitality to her intellect. The rich finer essence

## REMINISCENCES

of her soul was a perennial picture which crossed the vision of those about her and still shines immortal from the realm above. She lived and rested in confident and certain assurance of happiness in the life to come. Some years before she "passed onward" she, together with her husband and their children, were confirmed in the Protestant Episcopal Church.

Francis Albion and his dear wife have been denied children.

William Edward and Lydia have three noble sons, who are now young married men. Their eldest Tristram Roberts, passed through a college course at Columbia University, and the other two, John Roberts, and Ralston Roberts, through Yale University. The three sons are now in New York City in the bond business with their father—fine, noble fellows, a great comfort to us all.

Tristram Roberts Coffin married Marion Richards on October 22, 1904. They have two children: Lydia Constance, born March 27, 1907, and Tristram Richards, born October 15, 1908.

John Roberts Coffin married Mary Belle Hudson, April 27, 1905. Their children are: Harriet Hudson, born December 2, 1906, and Ralston Hudson, born November 16, 1908.

Since Mrs. Coffin wrote the above, the young-

## RHODA M. COFFIN

est son of William Edward and Lydia Roberts Coffin, Ralston Roberts, who was born in Indianapolis, Indiana at 10:40 P. M., December 31st, 1883, entered into eternal rest, September 5th, 1909.

He was but a young boy when his parents removed to New York City. He received his preparatory education at the Cutler School in New York, and at St. Paul's School, Concord, New Hampshire, at both of which he was a most satisfactory pupil. He entered Columbia University in his sixteenth year. After a course of study there he entered Yale University and was graduated from the Sheffield Scientific School, Class 1903. During his College years he distinguished himself as a typical athlete. At Columbia University he was one of the foot-ball team of 1899 which defeated Yale, and was the youngest man who ever rowed in a varsity crew at Poughkeepsie, N. Y., when in a Columbia boat. At Yale he played on the varsity foot-ball team for two years and was a member of the varsity crews of 1902 and 1903, both of which won the Yale-Harvard race. He was a member of the Yale "Book and Snake Society." He was baptized when a child at St. Thomas Episcopal Church, New York, and confirmed of his own desire while at St. Paul's School.



## REMINISCENCES

Possessed by nature of a vigorous physique and a bright intellect, courageous, gentle and sympathetic in temperament, full of quiet energy, broad-shouldered, and with a wholesome countenance, his personal presence was observed wherever he was.

When he completed his college course he entered the bond house of Coffin & Company, New York City and became a junior partner. His ability as well as his fidelity in business relations, were recognized in business circles. He was congenial in his work and companionship with his business associates, and his untimely death was sincerely mourned by them.

Ralston's natural impulses and inclinations were of the student type. Though popular in society, he was of a home-loving spirit, his preference being to spend his evenings at home with his books and the family, to whom he was devotedly attached.

He enjoyed the best of health until the last few weeks of his life, when an operation on his liver became necessary, from the effects of which he died.

His mortal remains were laid to rest on an elevated knoll commanding a charming prospect in beautiful Woodlawn on the afternoon of September 7th, 1909, amid a wealth of flowers and

## RHODA M. COFFIN

offerings from hosts of friends, just as the firmament of heaven was made gloriously brilliant by the light and rich coloring of the setting Sun, whose rays in splendor cast their long streams of golden light across the little strip of earth he now occupies. This rich display and glory of scenic grandeur seemed a divine benediction to his earthly career, and with us the memory of the impressive scene will not soon fade. We mournfully lingered about the sacred spot sorely reluctant to leave him "sleeping"—though he had passed

"Beyond the smiling and the weeping."

Our son, Percival Brooks and his wife, Lucy Vincent Baxter Coffin, have no children, but are devoted to us. We are a happy family.

They have brought their Certificate of Membership to Chicago Friends' Meeting, which gives us much satisfaction. I love to look at them as we worship together in the meeting.

Who would not be happy with such children and grandchildren? They are an unspeakable blessing, and our prayers for them are that they may be used in our Father's hands for great good to others.

At a later period—without date—Mrs. Coffin writes a summary of the lives of some members of her father's family.

Before closing this Family History, I would bear a

## REMINISCENCES

loving testimony to the worth of my eldest brother, Brooks Johnson, who died April 2, 1900. He was a man of great strength, an original thinker, far ahead of his generation in many ways, full of anecdotes and humor. He had a sympathetic heart for those in distress, particularly for those who had in their latter days been deprived of the luxuries of life. He lived a long life of usefulness, and after months of decline caused by paralysis, died in full faith in his Redeemer. Between him and myself there was a strong bond of union and confidence; no one could use the freedom with him that I could use; we loved each other devotedly.

The last time that I visited him previous to his death, we had an "experience meeting." To listen to his religious ideas was a great privilege which no one else had enjoyed. He had great faith in *true* Christianity, but scorned sham. He said to me, "I have never felt that it was right to be parading my experience before others, but to you I will speak of my confidence. God is my Father—I love Him—Christ is my Saviour, He is my only hope. It is not important to me what the preacher says, it is what he *knows* and what "these hands have handled." I would rather hear some old Auntie tell of what she has learned and enjoyed of personal contact with Christ—I would rather hear some dear old lady like Mary Elliott, full of love and tenderness, with a warm heart, tell of what she knows and feels than any popular orator with all his scholastic power." His testimony was a great comfort to me. I felt his death keenly.

## RHODA M. COFFIN

In 1853 my brother was married the second time, to Mary P. Stroud, daughter of Charles and Susan Stroud, a woman not far from his own age. She was a woman of a good deal of ability—a faithful wife.

Of this marriage there were born two children, a daughter whose birth took place May 6, 1861, called Georgiana Stroud, a child of winning ways and Raphael-like beauty, far above the usual type. But her stay was brief. She died May 10, 1864.

Charles Stroud, the second child, was born January 23, 1863. He was a lovely boy. Between the mother and this son there was an unusually strong attachment. He married Martha Sterrett, October 16, 1884, in Glendale, near Cincinnati, Ohio, a bright, warm-hearted young woman. His mother, after my brother's death, lived with him and died at his home in Cincinnati, Ohio, May 26, 1893.

John Edward Johnson, Brooks Johnson's eldest son, died in Cincinnati, Ohio, April 18, 1868, aged twenty-four years.

Again Mrs. Coffin writes:

Sister Phoebe—my eldest sister, made her home with us after sister Rachel's death. She was a great help with our children, one in whom I could always trust. From childhood she was a partial invalid and a great sufferer. She died January 13, 1863.

After he left Friends' Boarding School, brother Eli went into a dry-goods store with Benjamin Stratton. In course of time he married Charles' sister, Mary Coffin, and removed to Cincinnati, Ohio, and went into

## REMINISCENCES

business partnership with his brother, Brooks Johnson. He died February 25, 1901.

In 1850 sister Rachel, my youngest sister, a beautiful girl, and dear to me, came to make her home with us. She was educated at Friends' Boarding School (now Earlham College) and at another Friends' Boarding School at Providence, R. I. She afterwards became a teacher in the first-mentioned school. She was very popular with her associates. She married Stephen C. Mendenhall, and they lived near us at Richmond, Indiana, which gave me great pleasure. Her first children were twins, Emma Rachel and Walter Stephen, born in 1855.<sup>5</sup> Afterwards there were born to them Olivia; Herbert, who died in infancy, and Rhoda. Our children grew up together very much as one family.

There were born seven in the family of my parents, and all have passed over,—beyond—but myself. All died in the triumphs of living faith, having fought a good fight and kept the faith. I only am left; sometimes there comes to me a feeling of great loneliness, as I see my husband enjoying his brother and sisters, and I have none, no uncle or aunt, only three nephews and four nieces.

<sup>5</sup> Walter S. Mendenhall died at his home in Cincinnati, Ohio, June, 1910.—The Editor.



## VIII

“Until the day break and the shadows flee away.”—*Canticles*, 1, 17.

MRS. COFFIN was now near the completion of her earthly course. The last few years found her living quietly in her home, in contentment and physical repose. The disabilities of age crept slowly upon her. She abandoned her active and beneficent labors only when the feebleness of advancing years compelled her.

The following narrative of her last days and decease we record in the words of her husband:

For the last several months my beloved wife was very frail, but her mind was bright and clear, and she was able to enjoy a great many of the passing events of life, and to ride out every day and attend the Morning Meeting on First days. This she greatly enjoyed, although unable to take much active part in the public exercise of her gift as a minister. The kindly greeting of her friends gave her much pleasure; she frequently offered vocal prayer and sometimes made a few remarks. She was very much looked up to by the members of the Meeting, and was consulted on many matters which concerned them. She had remarkably good judgment and a strong mind, and was able to give help-

## RHODA M. COFFIN

ful advice to those who were in trouble or sorrow of any kind.

She attended Meeting for the last time on First day, ninth month, 5th, 1909, and offered vocal prayer; she also asked for the hymn "Nearer, My God, to Thee," to be sung.

On the same day we received a telegram announcing the death of a beloved grandson in New York. Percival and myself immediately took the Twentieth Century Express on the Lake Shore Railroad and went directly to that city arriving there on the morning of the next day. We found the household of my son William Edward in great trouble and sorrow. Ralston was a very remarkable young man and his loss was most deeply felt by us all. After spending two days in New York and attending the funeral, we returned home by the same route.

On First day, ninth month, twelfth, my wife was attacked by diarrhea and in her frail physical condition, her strength was soon so greatly reduced that her physicians found it impossible for her to rally, although at one time she seemed much like recovering, but additional complications arose, and she was exceedingly ill until she passed away.

She was generally quite conscious, was perfectly aware of her condition and expressed her preference to be at rest with Christ. Her sons from New York strongly urged her to use her will power toward recovering. This she had done other times under similar circumstances, but this time she was unable to rally,



## REMINISCENCES

and the disease continued to make progress until her recovery was past hope. She could not see company during her illness, and had not, when making effort to speak, strength of voice to be understood without great exertion on the part of the listener.

She quietly and peacefully breathed her last on the twenty-eighth of ninth month, nineteen hundred and nine.

Her five sons who had hastened to her bedside, and her nephew, Charles S. Johnson, from Cincinnati, arrived in time to be present when she breathed her last. There was a remarkable, peaceful, quiet and restful expression upon her countenance after death. During her exceeding weakness she did not suffer acute pain, but often spoke of her earnest desire for quiet and rest.

It was a fitting close of a long and useful life. She was eighty-three years old on the first of second month, 1909. She had led a very active life, largely devoted to the good of others.

The next day after her death her body was taken to Friends' Meeting House, No. 4411 Indiana Avenue. There was a wealth of flowers which covered the coffin and pulpit. The house was well filled with relatives and friends, and the service, while simple, was exceedingly beautiful. William Henry Matchett conducted the service, and gave a most appropriate and beautiful discourse, concise, but touching and full of life. The service was opened by singing the hymn, "Rock of Ages," which was followed by Scripture reading and some remarks by Alfred Bastin, who closed

## RHODA M. COFFIN

his remarks by reading a beautiful poem. He was followed by Charlotte Vickers, who had been intimately associated with my wife in religious work, and who bore brief testimony to her valuable life, and closed her remarks by reading a poem by Longfellow. This was followed by the hymn, "Nearer, My God, to Thee." The services closed with the hymn, "Abide with Me," and an opportunity was offered for those present to look upon her face before the casket was closed. It had been decided that the burial should be at Richmond, Indiana.

On the evening of the 29th, accompanied by my children, relatives and friends we entered a special car with our beloved dead and reached Richmond early the next morning. We were met at the railroad station at a very early hour by a number of our friends and relatives, among whom were Timothy Nicholson, Benjamin Johnson, and Samuel Dickinson.

The casket was taken to the Friends' Meeting House on South Eighth Street, preparatory to holding a service in the afternoon.

In the meantime, hundreds of persons called upon us at the hotel where we were stopping—personal friends and many others whom we had almost forgotten came to extend their sympathy and love to us. There were representatives from Muncie, Cambridge City, Indianapolis, and Vernon, Indiana, several from Cincinnati, and from other towns within reach. Two of my nephews, Albert and William Henry Coffin, came purposely, one from eastern Illinois and the other from Henry County, Indiana.

## REMINISCENCES

After receiving the sympathetic expression of several hundreds of our friends, a meeting was held at two o'clock on the afternoon of the 30th. The House, supposed to hold about five hundred, was completely filled with more people than could procure seats. The casket was again covered with floral offerings, and the rostrum was also exquisitely arranged with flowers. The service was simple and most appropriate. A sketch of her life was read by the pastor of the church. Edward Bellis, an old friend of ours, read a portion of Scripture, made some beautiful remarks, and closed with a prayer. He was followed by Allen Jay, in a simple but appropriate discourse, in which he bore testimony to the life and work of my dear wife, and closed with a prayer.

Many persons had gone to the church previous to the Meeting, to look on the placid face of my beloved one, and at the close of the service many others came for the same purpose.

The burial was at Earlham Cemetery. My dear parents were buried there, and our only daughter Mary Amelia, who died more than forty years ago (1860) was also buried there. In the same lot in which she lay, the remains of my dear wife were interred. A large crowd of persons was present and after prayers by Allen Jay and Levi Pennington, and the reading of a poem by Mary Perry Bellis, the casket was lowered into the tomb.

It was a solemn occasion. There was something to me extremely strengthening, to witness the devotion of our dear friends and the deep feeling which pre-

## RHODA M. COFFIN

vailed. Through it all I have to bear testimony to the supporting hand of my Heavenly Father. I realize that "God is my strength and my salvation, a very present help in time of need," and that "The Everlasting Arms" are underneath me.

The memory of my dear one is most precious. After more than sixty-two years of happy married life, during which we were thoroughly united in all the duties and activities of life, I miss her companionship exceedingly, but I can only say from the depths of my heart "The Will of the Lord, be done."

## A TESTIMONIAL

FIRST FRIENDS' CHURCH OF CHICAGO, ILL.  
Indiana Avenue and 44th Street

Chicago, Nov. 17, 1909.

To Charles F. Coffin and Family:

The enclosed memorial of Rhoda M. Coffin has been prepared by direction of Chicago Monthly Meeting of Friends and spread upon its minutes with the instructions to the Clerk that a copy be forwarded to thee and thy family.

On behalf of Chicago Monthly Meeting.

Very truly,

CHAS. C. HUBBARD,  
Clerk.

Testimony of Chicago Monthly Meeting of Rhoda M. Coffin, A Minister, deceased, Sept. 28th, 1909, in the 84th year of her age.

Rhoda M. Coffin was the daughter of John and Judith Johnson, and was born in Green County, Ohio, Second Month, 1826. Her parents were active members of the Society of Friends, and she was carefully brought up in a religious atmosphere. Early in life she gave her heart to God and became a Christian, which event she always referred to with great satisfaction. When she was about nine years of age her parents removed to Warren County, Ohio, and settled on the banks of the Miami, opposite the town of Waynesville.

On the 25th day of 3d Month, 1847, she married Charles F. Coffin. This commenced a happy union, which continued for over sixty-two years. They lived in Richmond, Ind. for nearly forty years. During the early part of her married life, her health was very poor, but she possessed undaunted energy, great force of character, and unusual mental ability, and overcame all the obstacles which stood in her way, living a life of great usefulness. For a long time she and her husband were active in a Bible School which was started during the Civil War, when many wives of soldiers, with their children were living in the city. During the visitation of cholera in Richmond, she

## RHODA M. COFFIN

mingled with those who were stricken, without any hesitation or at all thinking of herself.

She was active in Church Work, and became a Minister of the Gospel more than forty years ago. Since then she has traveled in the service of Christ through many lands. In the years 1871-2 in company with her husband, she visited England and attended many of the Friends' Meetings there, and took part in the Mission work carried on by Friends and others. She then traveled through the continent of Europe, and spent six weeks in Palestine.

She removed with her husband to Chicago in 1884, and in this city became actively engaged in the work that had occupied so much of her life in Indiana. She was specially interested in Women's and Girls' prison and reformatory work.

Rhoda M. Coffin preserved until her last sickness, a very retentive memory, a keen sympathy and deep interest in passing events especially those belonging to the Society of Friends in America and England. It was to her a source of pleasure to attend meeting and take part in the same, either by reading of scripture, a personal testimony, a short vocal prayer or calling for a favorite hymn.

Recognizing the necessity of earnest progressive thought and work in order that the church might fulfill its mission, she manifested a spirit of love towards those that felt called to this work. At the same time she was desirous that the work might progress along those Evangelical lines in which her faith was grounded and had been so fruitful in her work for the Master.

She had been for several months in a very feeble state of health, but was able to be about the house, ride out daily, and to attend meetings on First Day Morning. Feeling that her work was almost accomplished she lived in the constant hope and confidence of the Everlasting Life purchased for her through the merits of Christ her Saviour.

In the closing days of her illness as the end approached she longed "for rest," and we have the confidence that "the rest that remains for the people of God" was her portion, and the assurance that "blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, Yea, Saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors: and their works do follow them."

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS





# I

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

### THE FRIENDS' MISSION SCHOOL

DURING the Civil War between the North and South, beginning in the Spring of 1861, Richmond, Indiana not only increased in population, but poverty also increased. A house-to-house visitation was made which brought to light much poverty and many sorrowing hearts, and that many children were growing up without any religious teaching. We decided to make an effort to gather some of these into a Sunday school. In the early part of my married life I was given a class of Friends' children to teach who were not old enough to read. They were all children of Friends, and very lovely, and easily interested. I was very much at a loss as to what to do. I had never seen an infant class, but I set myself to work teaching orally. Ten of these girls were with me ten years, until they were young women, all earnest Christians, old enough and prepared to teach. When Fifth Street Meeting (now Eighth street) was established, the class was disbanded. Between us there had grown a strong bond of love. They all volunteered to help start the Mission School. It required the canvass of the town, which we accomplished, and procuring the

## RHODA M. COFFIN

use of an old public school building, we opened the Mission School with thirty children.

With two pupils I opened my infant class. We had a goodly number of teachers and devoted workers. We soon learned that singing was essential. The adoption of this exercise caused grief to some honest Friends and, strange to say, gave us much trouble. Our school prospered and we were obliged to seek for larger quarters. We rented a vacant church building, and removed to it until we could procure a suitable lot and build. We built our new Meeting House on what is now Eighth street, the second story for a church, and the ground floor for our Christian work. The citizens contributed largely to the fitting up of the basement for our school. There was in time as many as eight hundred children enrolled at one time. Five hundred and twenty-three of these were in my class, aged from three to fifteen. I obtained a thorough knowledge of every scholar, and of their homes. I threw my whole strength and interest into it, and sought to bring them into a knowledge of Christ. I studied the children and chose the subject and lesson needed as I stood before them and taught. They were not told what would be the lesson for the next week—they knew there would be something new and of interest. They were always certain that there would be some surprise.

I at one time offered to give a very pretty china doll to the girl who would bring ten scholars in three weeks, the time of our anniversary. It was very im-

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

portant that they should have confidence in me, so I took much pains to have the doll prettily dressed. To my surprise eight girls brought in the requisite number. I was out of pocket several dollars, but I had gained their confidence, and established an interest in the school. At the same time of the offer to the girls, I offered to the boys who would bring in ten, a nice little wagon. Several boys commenced with eagerness but gave up, all but one little boy about seven years old. He won the prize. He was a pretty, sweet, boy who but to see was to love. He worked faithfully and Willie Evans was the victor.

I saw what was coming and prepared to teach the boys a lesson, so purchased a nice wagon in which the boy could ride himself, and when the prize was given, with one voice they exclaimed, "O I did not know that it was going to be that kind of a wagon or I would have worked for it! I thought it was to be a little baby wagon. Say, Mrs. Coffin, won't you let us try again?" The lesson was the same, but the result was different. I declined their request. My great aim was to bring them to Christ and so teach as to build them up to the right standard of living, and I had the privilege of seeing many of them changed boys and girls.

I visited in their homes and received a cordial welcome. My scholars were from the saloons, from wrecked homes, from the rich and the poor. "The rich and the poor meet together and the Lord is the maker of them all," was our motto. I visited in sickness and death. During a visitation of the cholera

## RHODA M. COFFIN

in Richmond, numbers of both parents and children died. The father and mother and two children of one of my families died, leaving three children, a little girl of seven, a boy four, and a girl two years old. Their only possession was a dime with a hole in it, and tied about the neck with a white cord. Their daughter of eight was afterward taken sick and died in the city. She sent her love to me and said she was going to Jesus, and would I have the hymn sung at her funeral "The Throne of God in Heaven." I was sent for early in the morning and found all of the family ill. The mother dying, begged me to tell her how to be saved. While I was leading her to Christ the physician came and ordered me out; said it was the worst kind of infectious cholera and my life was too valuable to be wasted. I told him I would not go until I saw her accept salvation, or was dead. He shook like a leaf. Lovingly, patiently, and prayerfully I pointed the way and rejoicingly she accepted Christ.

The husband was intensely anxious for her salvation, but would not accept himself. The house was full of death. He was removed to another house, and a man was provided to nurse him. I stayed with him as much as possible through the day, till reason gave way and he died. Commending him to God I left him. For six weeks I was going from house to house, from death to death, for many of them had no one to care for them. The three little children I looked after a few weeks until I could find some one to care for them. I took them one day to our Yearly Meeting

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

then in session, and made an appeal which met with a response. Jehu Jessup and wife, he a minister, took the baby and adopted it with their own eight children. Hiram Hough and wife accepted the other two, and lovingly cared for them.

In connection with my class, I saw much of the inner life of the families, and was the confidant of many, and able to lift the burden and relieve many. Many men in their zeal or excitement forgetting their duties of fathers and husbands rushed to the war which was then raging; some were killed, others forgot their own and lavished what little they had on others. The marital tie was stretched to its utmost, much bitterness and separation followed. It was my privilege to heal the breach and bring them together. I was very happy in after years to receive their thanks for what I had done. There were many orphan children whom we aided to get homes. A large part of the children were gathered into the Sunday school. After years of joyous service, when my class was large, I was about to leave the work but became suddenly impressed that this was my last opportunity to win those children to Christ. I made a direct appeal, told them that I was going away and never should see some of them again. I asked them how many of them were Christians. Several hands went up. I then asked how many of them wished to be Christians—that Jesus was here,—he had new hearts for all of them, that the least of them could have one, and that he said “Let the *children* come,” “Ask and ye shall receive,” that we must just let him take

## RHODA M. COFFIN

the naughty heart and give us a new one full of love. I told them to say what I said, and just think of what he was doing. I prayed just as I told them to do. One little girl of seven years unbuttoned her jacket and held it open and said, "Dear Jesus, come in, I'se ready." Forty, to all appearing, then and afterwards were saved. Taking this little girl upon my knee I said, "Nellie what did Jesus do for you?" Looking up sweetly she said, "Mrs. Coffin he did give me one, it 'taint a bit like the other one, it is full of love." That child was afterward tested to the utmost, and was saved.

There has rarely been a more efficient and noble band of workers than were in that Mission, all laboring for the relief of the distressed and suffering and for the uplifting of the helpless—Joseph Dickinson, and wife and daughter, Samuel Francis Fletcher and family, our own sons and their families, Dr. William Waring and his wife Semira, Mary Smith, Lottie Smith, Hannah M. Johnson, W. B. Hadley and wife, Elwood Hadley and wife, Benjamin Johnson and wife, Martha Valentine, and many others.

The Mothers' Meeting was established, at which the women were taught to cut, and sew, and mend garments, assisted by a band of conscientious women, and a Children's Meeting where they also were taught to sew and read. My husband was superintendent of the School and conducted a Prayer Meeting on Friday evenings, and a Men's Meeting on Sunday evening where much good was accomplished.

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

Many women were going from place to place, into many evils, which grasped them in the worst form. There was no place for them to stay at night, except in a low prison or lodging houses, very unfit for women to enter. My husband threw his whole soul into the various branches of work, and in all the various interests we went hand in hand. I praise the Lord that we were permitted to be united. After years of toil and laboring in sweet fellowship, the time came for other hands to do the work. Elijah, our son, took the place of his father and had a noble helper in his precious wife.

The Home of the Friendless of which I have given some account in another paper was built and is still fulfilling the purpose of its existence.





## II

### THE ORIGIN OF THE HOME FOR THE FRIENDLESS AT RICHMOND, IND.

AN account of the origin of "The Home for the Friendless" built in Richmond, Indiana, and of the connection of my dear husband and myself including some others who were real helpers in its incipient stage—

In visiting amongst the scholars of our Mission School, and the poor, connected with our Mission work, a great need was developed of a Home where helpless women with children, friendless girls, strangers passing through our city, who for various causes must be cared for temporarily, diseased, deformed, and illegitimate children, the two latter not received in any Children's Home—a place where the friendless sick might be nursed, and erring girls might have a way to escape.

My dear husband, who was president of the Y. M. C. A. which had just been organized, together with Stephen C. Mendenhall, William F. Spencer, Christopher Jackson, and some others became interested, and agreed to get the Y. M. C. A. to take up the work. They introduced the subject, and a committee was appointed consisting of Rhoda M. Coffin, Mary Jackson, Rachael Mendenhall, and Sarah Iliff Davis, to confer with a committee of gentlemen and report to next meet-

## RHODA M. COFFIN

ing. The result was the appropriation of \$150, provided the ladies above mentioned could secure women memberships to the Y. M. C. A. equal to that amount, but the Association refused to adopt the work, or to be responsible for the funds. With this little support, the Committee of Ladies, organized, R. M. Coffin, Pres., Sarah Iliff Davis, Vice Pres., Rachel A. Mendenhall, Secretary, Mary Jackson, Treasurer. Several other ladies were soon added to our Board,<sup>1</sup> being careful to only receive on the committee such as were thoroughly enlisted. Our first inmate was received 1st Mo. 27, 1858. We employed Peter and Martha Bend, good kind-hearted Friends, to receive, and care for those whom we should admit, paying them a stated salary. The house was on what was then 7th Street, opposite a little Park. In a week, the house was full, we had seven under our care. This number would soon absorb all of our money. We found that the Y. M. C. A. was a hindrance instead of a help. Money was contributed freely to that Association, and the people were not willing to help us apart, so we withdrew, notified the Association of the fact, and received from them a very nice parting note.

We made the matter one of special prayer and soon decided to launch out. We rented a house, advertised for furniture, provisions, etc. I sent an appeal, as President of "The Home Mission Association of

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<sup>1</sup> Conspicuous among the whole-hearted co-workers in founding the Institution were the names, in addition to the above, Mrs. A. L. Samson, Mrs. Martha Valentine, and Mrs. J. P. Agenbroad.

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

Friends of Indiana Yearly Meeting," to all of its branches, within a radius of 40 miles, and on the 12th of March, 1863, we took possession of No. 66 South 6th Street. We opened it at 8 A. M., and by night the house was furnished, and wood and provisions enough to last for several months, and money to assist in clothing, etc. Several gentlemen gave funds monthly, some as high as \$50.

We soon secured Mrs. Ransom as matron, enlarged our Board with ladies interested, procured employment for all able to work. As our movement was on a thoroughly religious basis, every measure was adopted, which was at all likely to be beneficial. Sunday schools, prayer meetings, singing, music, gospel meetings, and instructions in the Bible by Christian men and women, to uplift them, comfort those in trouble and point all to Christ as one able and willing to save.

We had many girls who had lived not wisely, and to all of these we held out helping hands. We afterwards secured Elmina Johnson, as matron, who developed into a most remarkable woman, not attractive in her appearance, but of remarkable adaptability for the work, possessing great governing power with a large sympathetic heart and with a power to awaken the good, and inspire with a desire for better life. She soon succeeded Mrs. Ransom, a woman good for the work. Mrs. Johnson remained as superintendent until appointed to the position of assistant superintendent of "The Women's and Girls' Reformatory, at Indianapolis, Indiana,"

## RHODA M. COFFIN

where she remained until she died in the spring of 1893. We realized that we must have a home of our own suitably arranged for our work, which had developed very rapidly. Charles Price, Sr., donated a town lot worth \$450. Charles F. Coffin and two others gave \$500 each, and many others contributed as they had a mind to give. A house was built. Charles Price superintended the building free of cost. The building cost about \$8,000. We raised \$5,000 and mortgaged the property for \$3,000. Charles F. Coffin, Christopher Jackson, Abraham Gaar, and Stephen C. Mendenhall, who were most faithful allies, were appointed trustees. In all of this work my dear husband was most liberal in his contributions, and faithful in his service. The work, and that in connection with it, cost us on an average of \$1,000 a year, and we ourselves had to supply what was lacking. The ladies on the Board were devoted in their service for the Institution. Several churches and quite a number of individuals furnished rooms. Our building consisted of a "Lock-up," a good airy hospital, a large nursery, well lighted, and about 20 bedrooms, besides the officers' rooms, a hall for guests, parlor, reception-room for the inmates in which to spend their evenings, with a library, and a large, airy workroom, kitchen, laundry, and dining-room. Our buildings were finally ready for occupation and we sent out word to all of our branches to bring supplies of food, bedding, clothing, groceries, provisions wood, etc., from their different neighborhoods. Delegates from each branch with forty wagonloads of fire-

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

wood and provisions came bringing cooked food for a dinner. Eighty persons took dinner with the Board, speeches were made, and there was enough cooked food left over to last our large family for several days. "The Donation Day," as it was called, has continued to be a feature, I believe, ever since.

An appeal was made to the County Commissioners for help to erect the building, the Board promising to receive such persons from the County Poor House, as they thought were fit for the institution. They responded by a donation of \$1,000.

Judge George Holland, a noble-hearted man, had a case of a very interesting character, brought before him, a young woman for theft. He had our report of the condition of the Women's Prison at Jeffersonville, which we had inspected under an appointment of Governor Conrad Baker and if possible to ascertain the true condition. As a result we had found a deplorable condition existing. Judge Holland felt that he could not send this young woman there for it meant destruction. I was away from home at the time, and at the suggestion of my husband whom he consulted, he held the case until my return, when he came to see me. After hearing of the horrible condition which we had unearthed at Jeffersonville, he urged that we accept the provision of the new law passed by the Legislature of Indiana, authorizing the County Commissioners to legalize Homes for the Friendless when needful, and with the consent of the Board of Managers, to make them county reformatories, giving judges the option

## RHODA M. COFFIN

of sending female prisoners to these instead of to the State prison.

Our Board at once consented and gave to Sarah Iliff Davis and myself authority to act on its behalf. We went to Centerville, which was then the County Seat, and had a meeting with the Commissioners, Daniel B. Crawford, Jonathan Baldwin, and Andrew Wiggins, which resulted in their approval. Articles of Incorporation were taken out, one room was legalized as a county prison for women, they agreeing to bear the expense of \$30 in fitting it up. The proceedings were approved by the Board of Managers. The work was completed, the judges notified, the day set for the trial. We had repeatedly visited the young prisoner in the county jail. Her case was a plain one well proved, and we urged a "plea of guilty," promising to go with her into court, to tenderly care for her and when she had served her sentence to stand by her. This met the approval of the judges. She was brought into court, plead guilty, was sentenced to two years, the lightest sentence of the crime. We were made Deputy Sheriffs and she was handed over to us by the Court to see that she was taken to Richmond and placed in our "County Prison for women." I gave her my arm, and with Sarah Iliff Davis on the other side we went to the station. The train was behind time, this gave opportunity for the novel trio to be seen by a gaping crowd. We took her to the prison and locked her up, but in a few days, she was placed on her word of honor and freely mingled in the services of the Home. She soon

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

accepted Christ as her Saviour. When her time expired, a good home was provided for her, some distance from Richmond. She afterwards joined Friends and married respectably, and when I last heard from her she was very useful and filling her place in life creditably.

Arrangements were afterwards made to take the city prisoners committed by the City Council, and some interesting cases were received. I could tell of many most interesting cases in the various branches that came under our care, but I have not the strength to write.

I visited the Institution usually once a day and knew personally all the women and girls and children. Whilst I was president we kept in connection with all of the unfortunate girls for whom we had cared, and 50 per cent. were doing well. Many poor women and children were cared for. In connection with the Mission School and the Home I was instrumental in securing homes for 63 children.

I resigned my position in the Autumn of 1871, as I was going abroad for several months. I had succeeded in effecting what I had hoped—a noble band of ladies for a Board, a great interest awakened throughout the country for the erring, a *home* for the friendless. The Institution has continued to be successful and is doing much good to the present time.

Feb. 3, 1898.





### III

#### AN ACCOUNT OF THE ORIGIN AND CONDUCT OF THE WOMEN'S PRISON AND GIRLS' REFORMATORY AT INDIANAPOLIS, IND.

I AM aware that several articles have been written, in regard to the establishment of a Women's Prison and Girls' Reformatory, in Indiana, but it has been suggested that I write a short history of the origin, and the practical workings of that Institution, as my husband and myself are the only persons now living, who had anything to do with its beginning, or who know anything personally of the origin and completion of the Institution, outside perhaps of one or two members of the Legislature of Indiana who assisted in the passage of the bill for the establishment of the Reformatory.

Since 1865, we have been engaged more or less in visiting the State prisons, jails, and workhouses in the United States and Europe, as opportunity afforded. In every case where we applied, the privilege was freely granted us to preach the Gospel in the congregated assembly of prisoners, and freedom to visit them in their cells and converse with them on personal religion, or administer comfort to those who needed it. The Northern and Southern Penitentiaries of Indiana claimed our special attention.

## RHODA M. COFFIN

Our first work as far as we conceived it, was to carry the glad tidings of the Gospel to those in bonds, and at first our minds did not grasp the greatness of the work on which we had entered, the needs and the great possibilities that were before us. We soon discovered that there was great need of reformation in the conduct of the prisons, and of the officers who managed them. No thought seemed to have entered the mind of the State Legislature that enacted the laws, or the officers who were working under them in the government of the prisons, as to the reformation of the prisoners. They were considered as given over to Satan, past redemption, and "cooped up like so many wild animals."

At the first National Prison Congress, which was organized by the Rev. E. C. Wines, D. D., and held in Cincinnati, Ohio, we brought before it the need of better prisons, and more attention to the reformation of the prisoners. One warden said to me, "Mrs. Coffin, I greatly admire you, your strength of character, and devotion to what you think is right, but you are not practical, you lack judgment, it can't be done, it is nonsense. I am an officer and I know it can't." I praise God I have lived to see it accomplished. We were interested in our State prisons and visited them very often, were always kindly received, made suggestions, which for the most part were put away in the pocket, but we sowed the seed.

In the Winter of 1868, we received a request from Conrad Baker, then Governor of Indiana, to visit both prisons (Jeffersonville and Michigan City), and make

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

a thorough investigation of their condition, and report to him, enclosing an official document of our appointment, and requesting the officers in charge to render us every facility for the work.

We first went to Jeffersonville, where the women convicted of penal offenses were confined in a part of the prison set apart for them and under the same officers as the men. The way was thoroughly opened, and we were kindly entertained. We were allowed to go unattended in any part of the prisons. We visited the prisoners in their cells, talked with many, examined the prison in its various departments, and found things in a very bad condition, which we noted.

We then separated, taking different portions of the prison, to talk with the prisoners. One of the prisoners, said to me, "I thank you, you are so welcome, we are all glad to hear you and your husband, you do us good, but *do*, for God's sake, do something for those poor women, their condition is terrible, it is perfectly awful," and then, after being careful that he was not overheard, he told me that a number of the guards had keys to the women's prison and entered when they wished to gratify their lusts. If the women could be bought up they gave them trinkets or goods out of the government stores, if they did not yield, they were reported as incorrigible and stripped and whipped in the presence of as many as wished to look on. In the court of the prison there was a large reservoir where the men prisoners were obliged to bathe once a week. On Sabbath afternoons the women prisoners were

## RHODA M. COFFIN

brought out and compelled to strip, and thus exposed, required to run from the opposite side of the court and jump into the water, the guards using, if necessary, their lashes to drive them out to the howling amusement of the guards and their friends who were permitted to be present; keeping it up as long as they pleased.

There were children who had been born in the prison, their mothers having been there for several years. One baby we saw, but a few months old, the mother had been there for two years. This story was repeated by four men prisoners in different cells, who urged me to do something. When my husband and I met, we compared views and each had the same story. We said nothing to any one, except, in a private interview with the chaplain; he was loath to say anything for fear he would lose his position, but finally admitted that it was all true and much more.

After the books and records were examined as far as we could, we made our report to Governor Baker in confidence, stating that we were most kindly entertained by the officers, and every facility was given us for our investigation, and we felt exceedingly pained at the necessity of exposing the corruptions. After a long interview with Governor Baker, it was decided to keep our report for the time being confidential. And he would recommend a thorough investigation by the Legislature soon to meet and then if favorably acted on, he would give them our report as the basis of their investigation. This was done, a legislative committee was

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

appointed, and in its investigation found things much worse than we had reported.

Thus engaged we saw the necessity of a women's prison placed entirely under the care of women. Governor Baker, one of the noblest of men, a man of warm sympathy and full confidence in the ability of woman, after consulting with us on several points drew up a bill for the establishment of a women's prison. The class of women convicted of penal offenses being too small to warrant the erection of a building for them alone, and a reformatory for girls being badly needed, it was decided to combine the two under one management, the internal management of the prison to be under the control of a Board composed of two women and one man, and a Board of Managers composed of men, to erect buildings, prepare the grounds, etc., and to have charge of the finances. To the Women's Board was given the power to call for any books or papers, and to make an investigation of the finances and they were required to report the condition of the Institution annually to the Governor. All the officers in the building were to be women.

Up to the time of the preparation of this bill no one else was cognizant of the facts and conditions. It became necessary at this time to enlist others and make the matter public. Stoughton A. Fletcher, Jr., and James M. Ray were earnest supporters of the Board and afterwards were on the Board of Finance. Sarah J. Smith, who was the Matron for the Home of the Friendless in Indianapolis took hold with all the earnest

## RHODA M. COFFIN

enthusiasm and ability which so characterized her efforts in after years when superintendent of the Reformatory.

When the committee appointed by the Legislature made its report, great indignation was aroused. The people of Indiana would not tolerate such treatment of women prisoners. Although they were violators of the law, and some of them most debased, still they were, in the minds of the people, entitled to protection. We appealed to "The Representative Meeting of Indiana Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends," and to many others who were known to be friendly to the measure, to use their influence with the members of both houses of the Legislature. Both men and women were actively engaged in working up a sentiment which would sustain the favorable action of the Legislature in passing the bill. I was accorded the privilege of speaking in the Senate on the condition of women's prisons and made an earnest appeal for the establishment of the Reformatory.<sup>1</sup> Sarah J. Smith and myself spent several days lobbying amongst the men.

Charles F. Coffin, Barnabas C. Hobbs, Francis W. Thomas, and many others, spent much time in working up an interest in the members sufficient to cause them to act. The bill was passed and became a law and went into force, May 13, 1869.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Sarah J. Smith, accompanied by the Governor of the State, and Mr. Charles F. Coffin, also went with Mrs. Coffin before the Legislature and made powerful appeals that produced telling effect.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Coffin was appointed a member of the Board by Governor

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

The buildings were erected on the ground where they now stand.<sup>3</sup> When declared ready for occupancy, and the means provided for support, the seventeen women prisoners were brought from Jeffersonville prison in chains, with a number of deputies to guard them. As they filed in on the grounds, they made quite a procession. Sarah J. Smith had been appointed superintendent, and Elmina L. Johnson, assistant, both of whom had been serving as matrons for Homes for Friendless Women, Mrs. Smith in Indianapolis, and Mrs. Johnson in Richmond, both earnest Christians, women of rare executive ability and great power of government, and with good records as to management of the institutions they had served. The Board appointed by the Governor, and confirmed by the Senate, was composed of Rhoda M. Coffin, Adaline Roach and Lewis Jordan.

Upon the arrival of the prisoners, the Board and the superintendents with a most peculiar sensation, stood in the hall to receive them, it being an untried field and one of great responsibility.

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Baker, immediately upon the passage of the Act, May 13th, 1869. The women on the Board were styled, "Board of Visitors." The Board proceeded at once to arrange for a building by the appointment of an architect. The building was completed and inmates received on October 8, 1873.

This board was appointed for four years and Mrs. Coffin served until 1873, when she was appointed for another term by Governor Hendricks, and again on January 6th, 1877, was appointed to serve for a short term, until the organization of a new board could be effected which occurred March 12th, 1877.

<sup>3</sup> 1908.

## RHODA M. COFFIN

The first to enter with her shackles on was Sallie Hubbard, a murderess. She and her husband had been convicted of the murder of a family of seven, who were migrating westward and stopped with them for the night. The husband was executed, and the wife was sentenced to prison for life at hard labor. She had been incarcerated for seventeen years in Jeffersonville State Prison. She was a terror in the prison and exceedingly difficult to manage. The sheriff and two deputies brought her into the hall of the Administration building heavily manacled, and said, "Mrs. Smith, where shall we take her?" "Set her down," replied Mrs. Smith, "and take off her shackles." He replied, "We can't—show us the cell, she is an awful woman." "Take off her shackles," Mrs. Smith said, "she is *my* prisoner, not yours." They did so, and as the chains fell, she took the prisoner in her arms, kissed her on her forehead and said, "I receive thee as my child, and will be a mother, and I know thou wilt be a good daughter, let us pray, and ask Heaven to help us." They both knelt, Mrs. Smith's arms still around her. She plead for power to bring "the poor lost daughter home to God," and then rising with her prisoner, she said, "Come with me, dear, I have the loveliest little room for thee," and opening the door showed her her home for the remainder of her life. It was neatly furnished, with an iron bedstead, good husk mattress, a chair, small square table with a white muslin cover, a Bible and Hymn Book on it, a small looking-glass, the bed clothed in white, white curtain over the window, a locker



## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

for her use, and a pot of flowers in the window. All of the cells were similarly furnished.

It was but a short time, until the prayer was answered. The prisoner became a new creature in Christ Jesus, old things passed away and a steady growth in grace was witnessed. She became quiet, gentle, unobtrusive, faithful in service, always on the alert to see that there was no plot to do harm. She was worth two guards, and yet had the love and confidence of the fellow prisoners. For fourteen years she has led a meek and humble life.

This wonderful answer to prayer gave us great courage and confidence that our plan as organized was feasible and could be carried out, and that the worst prisoner could be reformed.

The Board of Trustees who had charge of erecting the buildings and of the financial management, only served a few months until the Reformatory was fairly started. With these we had the most perfect harmony; they were in full sympathy with the work.

A new Board followed who had no conceptions of the real work intended. We soon found that the machinery was cumbersome; the men had the money, the women the internal management. Politics and patronage were soon evident, politicians having the power of examining the books and being required by law to make a yearly report of the condition and of the entire management. We fulfilled our duty, and asked that the entire management be left to a Board of *women*, with all the powers of the other State Institu-

## RHODA M. COFFIN

tions.<sup>4</sup> The new Board of Trustees likewise petitioned for *the abolition of the Women's Board*, the whole to be placed in their hands, the Board of Trustees. Then came the contest. We rallied all our forces to influence the Senators,—ex-Governor Conrad Baker,—whose time of service as Governor having expired,—and Thomas A. Hendricks, who was now the Governor, Senator Bell of Fort Wayne, and others of that body, Charles F. Coffin, Nathaniel Carpenter, Jacob S. Willetts and wife, Sarah J. Smith, and many others whose names I cannot now recall, labored untiringly for placing the Reformatory wholly in the hands of a Women Board of Managers, who should control and manage the finances, see to the cultivation of the ground, and in every way conduct, govern, and manage for the best interest of the State, and the control of reformation of the women and girls committed by law to the Institution. This was finally carried through the Legislature, and Rhoda M. Coffin,<sup>5</sup> Adaline Roach, and Eliza C. Hendricks—wife of the Governor—were appointed by Governor Thomas A. Hendricks, and confirmed by the Senate according to law. On March 12, 1877, we entered

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<sup>4</sup> The provision for a mixed board did not work satisfactorily and the Legislature passed an act changing the management of the Institution to a board of three women.

<sup>5</sup> Mrs. Coffin was appointed President of this Board and served again four years. She was again appointed by Governor Albert G. Porter, March 7th, 1881, and served till her removal from the State in 1884, making a total service of fifteen years under four Governors. During the entire period she held the office of President.

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

upon the duties assigned us. We employed Anna Dunlap for secretary, who was a good bookkeeper, and her accounts were well and neatly kept. We were watched by suspicious eyes. One Senator said to Mr. Coffin when he was urging him to vote for the bill, "Women are sweet creatures and we like them, but they don't know anything about finances."

One thing was decided, that we *would not* go into debt; another was, that every dime should go as far as possible, and that we would know where it was used. We were most fortunate in our officers, whose hearts were in their work, and both were most economical. We all believed that women and girls could be reformed and everything was directed to that end. If one was known to be under conviction for sin, everything stopped, if necessary, until that individual was brought to a saving knowledge of Christ. Industry, education, and religion, were made the basis of the work. The mind to be stored and trained to think, and food for thought to be supplied: hence there was reading aloud while they were at work, and a school for education was established. A part of the girls were in school in the morning and the remainder in the afternoon, and such of the prisoners as could not read, write, and knew nothing of arithmetic, were taught in school in the evening. The day was begun with reading the Holy Scriptures, song, and prayer. Every one was required in the morning to repeat a verse from the Bible and join in the Lord's Prayer. In the evening some interesting reading, closing the day with prayers and song.

## RHODA M. COFFIN

All the prisoners were required to learn all kinds of housework. We did not try to make money. We endeavored to reform them and to prepare them for usefulness in the world when they were discharged. The ladies of the Board received \$160 per annum for their services, the amount intended only to pay for our necessary expenses. I regret that the salary was ever raised. The most of the salaries of the Board was used for a fund from which to draw, to procure for the inmates some extra needful things when discharged, or presents when they married, or after marriage articles of wardrobe, keeping up an interest in them and their connection with the Institution. The superintendents likewise contributed a portion of their salaries and were required to correspond with them after they left, and as far as possible visit them once a year. This was faithfully accomplished, and was usually the only outing the officers had.

The result was that a very large per cent. were doing well when I resigned from the Board. Both Governor Hendricks and Governor Williams, who succeeded Governor Hendricks, manifested the deepest interest in the Institution and were untiring in doing everything they could to aid us.

It was prophesied by a number of the officers of the other State institutions, that we would make a grand failure, and it was indeed a proud day when Governor James D. Williams, on visiting the Board said, "I have good news for you ladies, it will make you proud. This is the best managed institution in the State, the

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

most economical, the best work done, and the reports are the best of any of the State institutions. I, this morning, signed an order that the Reports of the other State institutions should be made as yours are, and the books kept as yours are kept."



## IV

### ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NATIONAL PRISON CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES HELD IN NEW YORK CITY, JUNE 8, 1875.

THIS meeting was a noteworthy epoch in Mrs. Coffin's beneficent career. That year the Prison Congress considered a subject with which the States at large had heretofore had little to do—the well-being and treatment of women prisoners. It also freed itself from the narrow tyranny of prejudice against women speaking in behalf of the outcast and abandoned her own sex, and extended an invitation to Mrs. Coffin to present a paper on a system for improving the condition of women prisoners. She readily assented to the request.

She tells us in a brief narrative of the occasion the following:

The Congress was composed of men and women of highest abilities, now awakened to the urgent need for something to be done to meet the evil and ever-increasing tide of immoral and degraded women who swarm our cities ere it should gain such power as to menace our nation and our country.

Very few present had faith that a woman could

## RHODA M. COFFIN

be reformed from such a course of life as that with which we were now grappling.

Mine was the first paper on the subject to be presented and I was the first woman to prepare and read a paper before the Congress. I was very timid about stepping out on unprepared soil and taking an entirely new position on this important subject, and when called for, the noble Rev. E. C. Wines, the leader of this great movement and President of the Convention, advanced to meet me as I with trembling steps made my way to the platform, and offering me his arm, said, "Don't be afraid, Mrs. Coffin, we will pray for you," and seating me by his side proposed to the audience a few moments of silent prayer. Fear vanished, and I read my paper, taking entirely new ground, one that had never before been taken. It met with great applause and was recommended for adoption.

This paper proved the foundation of the Reform Movement which has become so nearly universal in our country—the reformation of the criminal, instead of punishment.

### WHAT SHOULD BE THE SYSTEM OF TREATMENT APPLIED TO THE INMATES OF A FEMALE PRISON.

The proper treatment of prisoners will depend entirely upon the object that is to be attained. If punishment be the prime object, then the more severe the treatment, the more uncomfortable the position, the more completely we can surround her with everything that is loathsome, the sooner will the object be accom-



## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

plished ; and when her time is expired, she will be again thrown upon society as a moral cancer, with her evil tendencies intensified and her *powers* for evil greatly increased.

If reformation be the object, then all the means should be used that will tend to elevate, mould the character, and strengthen her better nature and her womanly powers.

The position that we shall take in this essay will be, that reformation should be the prime object ; that the protection of society is more thoroughly effected by reformation than it can possibly be by the severity of punishment. But in order to effect this, punishment becomes more or less an adjunct, for the prisoner must be deprived of liberty and placed under subjection. The State takes the place of a parent, and whilst administering punishment for past offenses or crimes, should seek to subdue and remould the character by throwing around her those influences which will awaken a new life, new thoughts, new aspirations, so that when she leaves the prison she may come forth fitted to take a position of usefulness.

It will be admitted by all who have turned their attention to the reformation of prisoners, that the proper construction of the building is essential to good discipline. A comparatively small defect in the plan of a building may render abortive all efforts for a thorough system of discipline. In order to have a perfect system for the treatment of convicts in a female prison, the building should be so arranged as to render every facil-

## RHODA M. COFFIN

ity for safety, convenience, discipline, industry, the promotion of health, and the thorough reformation of the inmates or convicts. They should be solid, plain buildings, adapted to the purpose. Not so much attention given to mere architectural display (as we often see in State institutions), but more to durability, convenience and adaptation to the work desired to be accomplished.

The women's prison should be entirely under the control of women, from the Board of Managers to the lowest office. Recent developments have proved that there are those who are fully competent to conduct a female prison with entire success financially, morally and religiously.

If a board of gentlemen for the financial management of a prison cannot be dispensed with, there should be a board of women managers, to whom should be entrusted the power to have in connection with the superintendent, the entire control and supervision of the convicts.

The appointment of all subordinate officers should rest with the superintendent of the prison, subject to the confirmation of the board. No subordinate officer should have the power to inflict punishment. The discipline should be firm, and the penalty decided and certain, but with the right kind of officers little punishment would be needed. A warden of one of the State prisons, who was noted for the frequency and severity of his punishment, assured the writer that with the right kind of officers in his prison containing several hundred men, the need of inflicting severe punishment would be rare.

Flogging and shower baths should never be allowed in a female prison. Degradation from position, priva-

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

tion of food, withdrawal of liberties, with the very guarded use of the dark cell, for a short period in extreme cases, will usually be found sufficient in hands of rightly qualified officers. Too great importance, therefore, cannot be attached to care in the selection of these. Every one conversant with prison discipline knows how much depends on having the right official in the right place. They should be women of sterling integrity, undoubted piety, tact, quickness of discernment, appreciation of character, apt to teach, possessing powers of government, a living example of divine grace over a consecrated soul. Thus the convicts have continually before them an example to follow—a goal to strike for.

Severe punishment or fear may deter a woman from open violation of rules, and may produce an apparent, but never effect a *real* reformation, the debasing effects, as a rule, only tending to sink her deeper and complete the destruction of her self-respect: and without self-respect she can not be reformed. To effect her reformation she must be elevated. Hope, therefore, should be instilled and kept alive in the mind and heart of the convict, being constantly strengthened by some object yet to be attained. Women are great imitators, easily influenced by stronger minds, hence the wisdom of surrounding the prisoners constantly with the hal-lowed Christian influence of their own sex.

Both common sense and reason teach that woman is the best adapted to have charge of, meet the wants, and supply the needs of female prisoners. She alone can understand the susceptibilities, temptations, weaknesses, and the difficulties by which such prisoners are

## RHODA M. COFFIN

surrounded; she alone can enter into the innermost recesses of their being and minister thereunto.

With such officers, many of the rules and regulations may be left discretionary with the superintendent, under the proper supervision of the Board of Managers. The prison should be as nearly as possible a well regulated household, each member receiving such discipline and training as may be peculiarly needful to her.

The prisoners received into our prisons, as a class, are ignorant, reflect but little, have limited powers of thought, and fewer avenues of resources for development. If the maxim be true, that ignorance is the parent of vice and crime, it is of the utmost importance that this want be met. The mind should be cultivated, and should also be supplied with the food needful for its proper nourishment. Regular, systematic instruction should be given if possible. Attention should be paid to this, so far, at least, as to have evening schools. The education should be practical, and have strict reference to the future. By such culture she would not only be the better fitted for the position intended for her to occupy by our great Creator, when liberated, but whilst, in prison, her mind would be diverted in a large measure from the gloomy thoughts and constant dwelling upon the past, and what *she* considers her hard fate.

Both education and religion are forces of incalculable power. But whilst education tends to inspire self-respect by quickening and strengthening the intellect, developing ideas, and furnishing new food for thought, religion is the only power that is able to overcome the evil of the heart. Therefore, *religious instruction* is

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

the greatest instrumentality that can be used in the regeneration and reformation of convicts. In order to effect this, every right and proper means should be sought out and made available in endeavoring to bring them to Christ, that through faith in His blood, their hearts may be cleansed and they made new creatures. With such a foundation upon which to build—with a Christ life in the soul, and with the impartation of Divine grace, we have much to hope for. In order to effect such reformation we must combine with thorough religious culture, strict moral discipline. In winning souls to Christ, as well as in teaching the practical duties of a Christian life, outside influences may be very useful. Men and women of purity of life and devotion of heart to their Lord, will be a great power. Thought being presented by a new mind in a new phase, is often productive of great results.

The prisoners on the Sabbath should be kept occupied with something interesting or profitable, with singing, reading, pleasant conversation on topics of interest and profit. Chapel services should be regularly held. Prayer meetings are an important adjunct, in which the convict should feel that she has the right to participate in songs of praise, prayer or experience. Sabbath schools are an agency not to be ignored, but will be found to be invaluable aids in awakening to a new life and strengthening the moral and Christian character.

One of the great mistakes of the present day and a prolific source of evil, is the too-prevailing idea that labor is degrading to woman; that to be engaged in the various departments of woman's work is beneath the

## RHODA M. COFFIN

dignity of a lady of culture. The poorer classes imbibed the spirit of their more favored sisters, ignore the various avenues open to them for procuring an honest livelihood, and thus become an easy prey to the tempter. Very few women who are competent and willing to work are ever found in prison. Idleness and pride engender vice. Labor is essential to reformation. It is not only a means of support, but an auxiliary to virtue. Everything in a prison should point to the advantage of industry. Unless the convict is taught to labor and acquire habits of industry, and a love for and pride in *some* kind of work, she will be almost sure to fall. She should be taught to do well all the duties of housewifery, and, if possible, some kind of trade—a trade which could be carried on without machinery—so that when she leaves the prison, she goes forth equipped and girded with the power of supporting herself honestly and virtuously. Habits of cleanliness and order should be enforced, and indolence or laziness severely punished, if they cannot be overcome by milder treatment.

The food should be plain, but good, and of sufficient variety to ensure health. Outdoor recreation is essential to the health as well as to the uplifting and reformation of the convict. Both diet and recreation may be made powerful agencies in the hands of a wise and judicious officer. Every prison should have a well selected library of religious, moral, historical, and other works that may be selected, which will have a tendency to aid in the work of remolding.

To fit prisoners for entrance again into the world, and to combat evil with its temptations, they should be

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

tested. This may be done by increased liberty, and added responsibilities. The system should be so arranged that the latter part of the imprisonment should be merged into liberty. The restraints should in a measure be gradually removed, and so far as may be, the prisoner placed in ordinary life, with trust reposed and an opportunity given to meet and overcome temptation. This, perhaps, can be accomplished by advance of position to powers and trust. The reformation of woman being the prime object, the history of her character and the registry of her crime, *open to public inspection*, is highly objectionable, for her character is so exceedingly delicate, and her reputation so very difficult to regain when once lost, that everything should be avoided in her treatment or punishment that would impede or retard her recovery.





## V

PAPER READ AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NATIONAL PRISON CONGRESS, SARATOGA SPRINGS, N. Y., SEPT. 6TH TO 10TH, 1884.

THE President, Dr. E. C. Wines, introducing Mrs. Coffin said:

“The lady who will read the first paper has been for several years the President of the Board of Directors of the Indiana Reformatory for Women, and is now officially connected with the “Relief Society of Chicago for Discharged Prisoners.” I have pleasure in introducing Mrs. Charles F. Coffin of Chicago.”

Mrs. Coffin responded:

This paper which I have prepared approaches the subject of women's prisons, not from any sentimental standpoint. I approach it from entirely another standpoint, and that is, what is the best interest of the state in regard to how women prisoners should be cared for.

### WOMEN'S REFORMATORIES, POLICE MATRONS, ETC.<sup>1</sup>

The questions which are to occupy the attention in this section of the National Prison Association this afternoon, are of vital importance, affecting as they do

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<sup>1</sup> From the printed Report of the Prison Congress.

## RHODA M. COFFIN

the life and vigor of the nation, for its strength lies in the virtue of its women, and the purity of marital life.

In every country of the civilized world there is apparent at the present time an increasing interest in prisons and prison reform—a far more intelligent line of thought is observable. As the investigation has progressed, the condition of women prisoners has claimed more serious attention. During the last decade the subject has been presented in some form to the most of our legislative assemblies, either by gubernatorial messages, bills, or petitions, varying in degree in proportion to the enlightened public opinion upon the subject, but all bearing the same impress, to wit: an awakened consciousness to the danger that is threatening the life of our nation by the alarming increase of crime among the women and girls of our land, and the rapid increase of a criminal class.

It is cause for encouragement that a great change has been wrought in the public mind by the combined forces of the benevolent, the philanthropist, and the Christian, who, seeing the danger that threatened their homes and their country, have laid aside their prejudices, thrown down the barriers which have hitherto separated them, and joining hand to hand have united in one grand noble effort to stop the ravages of the invading foe. Some progress has been made. Instead of our public men taking hold in a sort of perfunctory way, as was the case during the first agitation of the subject, there are many of them now found foremost in the ranks, who, with a hearty good will, lend their aid in the solution of this difficult problem. As yet, in

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

but few of the states has there been much advance made in the establishment of separate prisons or reformatories for women or girls, under the control of women. Some progress has been made in a few of the states in placing women in more advanced positions in regard to reformatory or industrial schools for girls, but none of the states, I believe, except Indiana and Massachusetts, have shown their faith by their works, by establishing State prisons of a reformatory character, and placing them in the hands of women. Indiana leads the van in the completeness of her confidence in woman's powers. Her embryonic faith enacted a law for the establishment of a reformatory for women and girls; erected a building, and appointed a financial board composed of men, and a philanthropic board, composed of women and a male physician, but all the officers for the interior government of the reformatory, to be composed of women, selected and appointed by the superintendent, who herself is appointed by the Board of Managers. The embryo grew and developed until the completion of a full-grown faith became manifest about ten years since by the transfer of the reformatory to a Board of Managers composed of three women, clothed with full powers, as in other State Prisons. As the full-grown faith began to bear fruit, some of the seeds thereof were carried by some unseen power over the States of Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York (States with wealth and intelligence, and who should have opened their hearts to receive it), and lodged in the fertile soil of Massachusetts, which State is always found in the foremost ranks in efforts for fallen humanity. Soon there sprung up from that seed, that grand, noble institution known as

## RHODA M. COFFIN

the Reformatory Prison for Women, but her faith in woman's capacities is not yet perfected, as is evidenced by the fact that her Board of Commissioners is composed of three men and two women. Nevertheless, it is a grand institution—an honor to the State. Of the benefits arising from the above named Institutions, I shall speak more fully further on.

The need of separate prisons, or reformatories, for women and girls, under the absolute care and supervision of women officers, should be apparent to all, and is one of the most important questions that will claim the attention of the National Prison Association. With the exception of the two States above mentioned, female convicts are confined in the same State Prison as men, in a small department either in the basement, attic room, or some other circumscribed place, as a rule poorly ventilated and illy adapted to any reformatory measures. The prisoners are usually employed in washing the clothing of the men prisoners, or in making or mending them—a custom deleterious to the women, and no advantage whatever to the State, for the invalid corps in the men's prison is just fitted for that kind of work, and would be benefitted by having it to perform. Thus kept in a narrow, contracted place, no systematic plan can be carried out. Female prisoners, as a rule, are ignorant of any system or discipline. Provision should be made for a thorough, systematic training in all kinds of housewifery, in order to fit them for an honest livelihood upon their release. No reformation can be effected without industry and systematic labor. It is probable that all of our prisons where women are confined have a matron, who has the oversight of the

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

female prisoners, but that officer is usually selected not so much for her peculiar fitness for the place, and known success in reformation, as for some favoritism or personal preferment. They have but little power, have no control over the finances, and therefore cannot develop any plans for the reformation of the convicts. To expect them to do so under such circumstances would be to require them to make bricks without straw.

Indeed, the thought of reformation does not enter into the discipline of such prisons. Two points only are taken into consideration: the punishment and prevention from escape of the prisoners. However exalted the warden may be, and earnest and conscientious to do his whole duty toward the female prisoners, the class from whom he must select his subordinate officers are rarely men who are noted for their virtue or their immaculate purity. The guards in some of the prisons (it may be in most) have keys to the women's prison, and in some cases have keys to their cells. The results in some instances have been most terrible: where helpless women,—incarcerated criminals we grant,—but not always debased or thoroughly degraded. It may be some of them, with a love for fine dress, jewelry, etc., and without the means to gratify it have been tempted to steal from their employers, and have been arrested, tried, and convicted of larceny, and sent for a term to the State prison. Their reputation is gone, but their virtue is still preserved, and their sense of virtue is as keen as any woman's. They are placed in such an institution and may be forced to minister to the lust of the officers. They are powerless, they are only convicts, and have no redress.

## RHODA M. COFFIN

I am not drawing here imaginary pictures, or stating something that might possibly occur, but giving you a faint sketch of what has actually taken place within my own personal knowledge in this, our country. Could I convey to you some idea of the terrible abuses which have been unveiled in the investigations which my husband and myself have made into the condition of our prisons and prison system, you would at once be convinced of the need of some reform as regards the case of female criminals. I would not for a moment convey to you the thought that this is a picture of that which exists in every prison where women criminals are confined under the care of men. We have some noble wardens in our State prisons, who would gladly better the condition of the female prisoners if they could; but with all their other duties, it is impossible for them to bring to bear their powers in the work of reformation which should be carried on in a woman's prison.

Again, men cannot reform debased women. Most women who have descended so low as to be incarcerated in a prison under sentence, have lost self-respect and the finer sensibilities of their character. Many of them are women of easy virtue, having been debased by men and accustomed to use their powers to influence them for evil. Hence men are at a disadvantage in undertaking to deal with them. It is also attended with great danger to themselves. First, the demoralizing effect of such influence on their own lives and character. Second, their reputation, although it may be of the purest and most exalted, is placed in the hands of the vilest and the lowest, and may be blasted irretrievably. The cost is too great for pure-minded men, and any

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

other kind should not be permitted to enter the walls of such a prison for humanity's sake. Hence the need of a women's and girls' reformatory to be under the *entire supervision* of women. To this some female convicts object. They greatly prefer being under the management of men. When the female prisoners were removed from the Southern prison, Jeffersonville, Ind., to the Women and Girls' Reformatory at Indianapolis, they protested vigorously against the change. They, for certain favors, had been allowed privileges; money had been given in some cases, to others liquor and tobacco. And when these perquisites were all withdrawn, and they were placed in the pure atmosphere of God-fearing women, the change was not agreeable to them—strong proof of the need of a separate prison.

Let us examine some of the objections. The strongest one in the mind of the tax-payer is that there are so few women criminals in the different States, that we cannot afford to erect and sustain another institution. We ask why is it there are not more women and girls sent to prison? It is not because there are not more criminals, for there are thousands of women and girls in the United States who should be in a woman's or girl's reformatory. In the city of Chicago alone there were about 8,000 arrests of women and girls during the past year, all of whom passed through the station-houses. A large portion of these should have received a maximum sentence subject to conditional release and been committed to a woman's prison or reformatory, to be kept under training and surveillance until reformed.

If a woman or girl is arrested, convicted of crime and sent to our workhouses or penitentiaries, it only adds

## RHODA M. COFFIN

a stigma without any benefit. Her labor is not remunerative. There are no reformatory measures—she associates with those deeper in crime than she is herself and in most cases comes out vastly worse than when she entered. Hence many judges and juries, when young women or those even more hardened in crime are brought before them, cannot find it in their hearts to send them to such prisons as we have; they are, therefore, in many cases, either acquitted, let off with a light fine, or dismissed on promise of good behavior. Thus they have the stigma of having been arrested and tried with no corresponding benefit to them or the State. Said a leading judge: “I have had twenty such cases during the past year, every one of whom I should have sent to a woman’s prison, but I could not send them to such as we have.” Many others have borne the same testimony.

Another objection urged is that women superintendents are not capable. We answer unhesitatingly there are women in every State of the Union with as great capabilities for the proper and successful conduct of such institutions, financially, morally, and religiously, as can be found among the men. Indiana has thoroughly proved this. The four consecutive Governors, under whose administration the board of managers (all ladies), have served, have borne the same striking testimony, viz.: that it is the best managed of any of the institutions in the State, the most careful and economical in its expenditures, thorough in its discipline, and successful in the work of reformation. Over 80 per cent. of those who have passed through the reformatory are now doing well. The prison that can reform crim-



## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

inals, and send them out better men and women, law-abiding instead of law-breaking, producers instead of consumers, is doing the best thing for the State, morally and financially.

The object of all prison discipline should be reformation. In order to effect this, reformation must first take place in the public mind. The idea of prisons and their purpose in the public mind at the present day does not differ materially from that which pervaded the minds of the people during the reign of the ancient monarchies of Egypt, that of detention and punishment. Reformation implies re-forming or making over—a complete remodeling. This should be the prime object in every prison. If men and women so conduct themselves as to be unfitted for liberty, unsafe to the interest of the state or community, and their incarceration is necessary, it is *prima facie* evidence that those individuals need reforming or making over, and when the State takes the position of a parent, and assumes control over them, and the right to punish, she also assumes the responsibility of the care of those persons, and is bound to bring to bear such discipline as may be reformatory in its character, and to use all possible means to surround them with all of those influences that may be helpful in producing that change.

For woman the means used should be of an uplifting character. She can not be reformed until hope is kindled and her self-respect in a measure established. In order to effect this all of the officers should be God-fearing women of the purest type, who have learned to govern themselves, presenting to the prisoners an example to follow. The discipline should be firm and

## RHODA M. COFFIN

decided. The three principal adjuncts—education, industry, and religion—should all be brought to bear freely upon the character. There should be perfect system in the industrial department, and all of them should be taught all kinds of housewifery to fit them for service, a position which the most of them will have to occupy. They should be made to pass through all the grades and perform the work well, and when their time expires they have the means of an honest livelihood within their power.

The training and discipline of the mind is invaluable; to be taught to think, to reason from cause to effect. As a class they think or reason but little, hence all should have the privilege of school a portion of each day, if capable of learning. All should be taught to read understandingly, for the mind will act, will feed on something, and should be supplied with the right kind of food and trained to appropriate it.

Religion is an important adjunct, while industry is absolutely essential, and the discipline and training of a school is so beneficial for the mind, yet a personal saving knowledge of God through Christ Jesus is the prime factor in the reformation of a convict. Hence the need of church services, Sabbath schools, and prayer meetings, good books to read, and a variety of labor. With these all combined in the hands of conscientious women of financial and executive ability and the power of controlling others, a large number of the women and girls who are now floating from one prison to another might be reformed.

The Indiana Reformatory for women and girls is reformatory in its character. It is composed of two

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

branches entirely distinct and separate, yet under the same board of managers and superintendent. The one is penal, to which are sent those who are convicted of crime, such as murder, manslaughter, horse-stealing, arson, counterfeiting, forgery, and larceny, for all of which crimes prisoners have been received in that institution as in any other State prison. The other department is for girls young in sin, and those exposed in the midst of evil. These are committed during minority and may go out on good behavior or "ticket-of-leave," under the surveillance of the board. The Massachusetts Reformatory has the same system of "apprenticeship" but rather better developed. Every effort is made for their reformation.

But, says the sceptic, a woman who has sunk so low as to come under the action of the law, is beyond reformation. Much is said about the depths to which women may fall, that their powers of corruption are immense, far in excess of the men. While we always have claimed that women are equal to men, we have never yet admitted the point that she was superior to him in ability to sin or to entangle others. In reply to the objection that a bad woman can not be reformed, we refer you to the marvelous success of the Indiana Reformatory, which had for its head for many years, Sarah J. Smith, one of the noblest women and most successful prison officers which the world has ever produced.

Station-houses and city prisons are places of almost unmitigated evil. Through the station-houses of large cities there pass annually many thousands of prisoners, many of whom are exceedingly vile and corrupt beyond

## RHODA M. COFFIN

description. Among these are thousands of women and girls, who have grown hardened in crime, and vie with the men in their profanity, obscenity, and lust; others are young girls, upon whose faces still may be seen the bloom of youth. Others, so young as scarcely to conceive of what crime is, having been abducted or enticed, under some specious charm, and ruined before they had any conception of womanhood. Again others, the victims of misguided confidence, full of shame and with hope blighted, rushing helplessly or madly along down the vortex of crime and misery. Others are shop girls, who through love of dress or from pressing poverty, have been tempted to purloin from their employers. Again, some who are wrongfully accused by some thoughtless or hard-hearted employer are thrust into the station house to await arraignment before the police court, in some cases friendless and alone. All these are hustled together, often so crowded that there is not room, even so much as to sit on the floor, while all around their open cells, shut off only by bars, very frequently may be seen one surging, sickening mass of men and boys, filling the corridor contiguous to the women's cells, and pressing so close to the bars as to converse freely in such language as **would** make any one blush to hear it. There also are received destitute women, strangers, who have no place to sleep and are given shelter for the night, also lost children. In the police stations of Chicago during the past two months [1884] over 600 lost children were cared for until restored to their homes. Throughout the United States,

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

with but few exceptions, those station-houses are under the care of men, some of whom have received their positions for political services rendered to the dominant party, and but few of them on account of peculiar merit for the position, and until quite recently there were no matrons in any of the station-houses. But through the efforts of the ladies of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union matrons are now permitted to have a place in the station-houses of some of the cities of nine different States. In some they are permitted by sufferance only, philanthropic ladies paying their salaries, whilst in others they are now employed by the municipal authorities to stay in the stations and have some care over those arrested by the police or received for the night, such as lost children, destitute women, etc.

These matrons have no power, except a moral one. This step at first met with strong opposition from the police, but many of them now fully acknowledge the benefits derived therefrom through every department of the prison. This is a move in the right direction, but far short of what it should be. Desirous of seeing the working of this system, I visited recently one of the police courts of the city of Chicago, where was revealed to my startled vision the fact as above stated, of near 8000 arrests of women and girls during the past year who had passed through the station-houses of Chicago alone. Upon pressing my way into the court-room I found congregated, about 250 persons, composed of a few weeping mothers, or anxious-looking fathers, or brothers and sisters, but by far the larger portion of them, a lecherous, low mass such as daily gather into

## RHODA M. COFFIN

the police courts and feed upon the filthy garbage which is there presented. Large numbers were arraigned of all classes. In the midst of it all stood the noble matron, her very presence a benediction. As the female prisoners were arraigned she drew near the bar. One among the many was a young girl, about nineteen, arraigned for drunkenness, a bright, handsome young face, not inured to crime. She had never been before the court; modest and diffident she was overwhelmed with shame. When her trial was ended the matron took her by the hand and gave such words of encouragement and hope as only she could do, and at once sought to devise means for her reformation. Another case followed. A young woman, well-dressed, arraigned for larceny, in a house of ill-repute. The matron again stood by the bar, facing the spectators, and here the value of her presence was most perceptible as a restraining power over the attorneys and others, causing the trial to proceed with becoming decency. Two little school girls, not yet in their teens, were brought as witnesses against a fortune-teller who had beguiled them into her den. There the matron stood by to protect those little children. And thus I might go on giving you instance after instance of the good effect of her presence in that court-room, but I have just lifted the veil to give you a glimpse of the work that is needed and the force of a God-fearing woman. Her opportunities even thus limited are great. Sometimes an unsophisticated girl is brought in who has come from the country in search of higher wages; she is alone, her

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

means exhausted, and she is exposed to want; and save for the matron's motherly sympathy and counsel, might be ruined. And again, there are those poor, unfortunate, misguided creatures, who, weary of sin, may sometimes be reached by her loving tenderness and sympathy, and turned from their course into a path of virtue.

There are some work-houses or houses of correction which are well managed and the women arranged for in a remarkable manner, considering the difficulties to be overcome, such as the House of Correction at Chicago under the excellent supervision of Mr. Felton. This is one of the best institutions of its kind in the United States. But the work of reformation of the women rarely enters into the constitution of such institutions, neither does it seem to be among the possibilities, and the officers, with few exceptions, would be glad to be rid of them, that their energies might be directed to the development and training of men. In some of the work-houses the men and women work together on the streets or stone pile, and but little restriction is exercised over their commingling together.

Some of the county jails are a disgrace to civilization, and the most of them are schools of crime. But I can not enlarge upon these in this opening address, but trust others may follow, and be able to throw some light upon their proper construction, management, etc. In some houses of correction, workhouses, and county jails, matrons are employed but with no power except such as she receives from the warden or jailer. In every place, therefore, whether police station, work-

## RHODA M. COFFIN

house, house of correction, or county jail, where female prisoners are incarcerated, there should be a woman's department under the control of a capable, middle-aged Christian women, who have full powers in every way. The finances needful for the conduct of such a department should be placed in their hands. There should be a thoroughly organized graded system of reformatories, with a supervising board empowered to transfer and adjust the inmates from one institution to another as might in their judgment seem best for the good of all; buildings should be erected in each State, inexpensive, but fitted to the work to be done. Laws should be so amended as to cause the arrest of keepers of brothels and houses of assignation and prostitutes, street-walkers, and drunkards, and upon conviction thereof they should be sent to a woman's reformatory prison for not less than one nor more than two years for the first offense, and upon second conviction should receive a maximum sentence, subject to conditional release on giving full evidence of reformation.

The work for discharged prisoners is in its infancy. In a few of the large cities there are organized associations for the care of discharged female prisoners. In New York there is, I learn, an excellent organization, which is doing good work. The Dedham Home in Massachusetts for discharged prisoners, supplements the work of the reformatory prison for women in affording a temporary home for discharged prisoners until they can obtain employment. Especially is this association valuable in caring for discharged prisoners with young children, for whom it is so difficult to find em-



## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

ployment. Their board is paid for a few weeks from the State appropriation for that purpose. But, owing to the admirable plan adopted by the reformatory of providing for them homes previous to the expiration of their sentences, the number needing such a home is decreasing annually. The Indiana Reformatory for Women and Girls provides homes for all who will accept, and most of them are very grateful for such provision, and as their time of release draws near special care is taken to fit them for their departure, and a correspondence is kept up with them after their release, for their encouragement, and but few of them disappear from our sight. This work, I trust, will claim the special attention of this conference.



## VI

THE NATIONAL PRISON ASSOCIATION MEETING IN DETROIT, MICHIGAN, OCTOBER 18TH, 1885.

A LARGE number of representative and prominent persons of our country interested in prison reform, met in Detroit on the above date to discuss the needs and methods of such reform.

The Hon. James B. Campbell of the Michigan Supreme Bench stated in his address of welcome "that the object of the association was not to make easy the life of the prisoner, but rather to prevent others to join with him, and lead him away from his criminal practices. He emphasized the importance of taking good care of our prisoners as a public duty. He believed in a better knowledge of the criminal law by society in general and desired justice in the dealings with prisoners and supposed criminals. No prisoner should be placed in such surroundings that he be made a criminal. He cited known instances of honest men being arrested and sent to jail by county justices simply because there happened to be no one present who could vouch for them, and argued for the simplification of the criminal laws. He recalled the fact that the De-

## RHODA M. COFFIN

troit Public Library was formerly enlarged and sustained by means of fines for minor offenses, but such method of punishment has been almost entirely abolished. Having but imprisonment only for a punishment bands together all criminals—great and small, and it may in the end require an increased effort to suppress crime.

Ex-President Rutherford B. Hayes, presiding, after returning thanks for the welcome extended, in the course of his remarks said: "The end aimed at in legal punishment, so far as concerns criminals, is not vengeance, not mercy, not absolute justice. It is the welfare of society. Whoever wishes to protect society from crime will find upon reading the extensive programme prepared for this Congress that it embraces among its topics the punishment and reformation of criminals, the prevention of crime, and the far-reaching and enduring influences of *labor*, of *education*, and of *religion*."

Among the topics discussed was Women's Prisons. Mrs. Coffin was introduced to the audience and by previous request, presented the same paper (see paper just preceding) that she read before the Prison Congress held at Saratoga Springs in 1884. This paper, together with her suggestions, was received with marked approval and interest.

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

The following paper along similar lines was written by request for another occasion.

### CONVICT LABOR ISSUES

#### *Written by request*

ONE of the most important questions which should claim the attention of the benevolent, philanthropic, and Christian people of the land is how to *arrest* the increase of crime among the women, for without a high standing of rectitude, honor, and purity among her women, no nation can flourish. The State of Illinois has the alarming revelation now before her that in the city of Chicago alone there were during the last year about eight thousand arrests of women. This does not indicate that there were eight thousand individual women involved, but there were so many violations of law by women of sufficient flagrancy as to warrant arrest. Many of these float from the streets to the courts, and vice versa; others from streets to prison and from prison to the streets. It needs no argument to show the result of this on a community, each repetition only adding to their powers for evil. Neither is there need of arguments to prove the necessity of a change in our prison system and the laws which produce such results. The laws should be so amended as to be preventive and reformatory in their execution.

There should be provision made by the state, *first*, for prevention, such as is contemplated in the effort which is now being made for securing a "state training school for dependent and wayward girls." To this no violator of law should ever be sent. Such an institu-

## RHODA M. COFFIN

tion should be preventive, not reformatory. Another great need of the State of Illinois is a "women's and girls' reformatory" for violators of the law. An effort was made during the sessions of the last legislature for the establishment of such an institution and a bill introduced, but I am sorry to say it died of inanition. Both of these institutions should be built and supported by the state, the control to be under the care of boards of managers composed exclusively of women. The finances, education, industry, and religious influences all to be under their control, officered throughout by capable women of pure hearts, pure lives, and who believe that women and girls may be reformed and trained into useful lives. All penal institutions should be reformatory. Especially is this the case for women. Their sentence should be for reformation, and to accomplish this long sentences are essential. This thought is now dawning upon the public mind, but may scarcely be said to have been formulated into an idea.

Prisoners should not be sentenced to "hard labor." It degrades labor, and gives a false idea not only to the prisoners, but to the public in regard to work. One of the greatest mistakes of our country is the prevailing idea that labor is degrading to woman, that to be engaged in the various departments of women's work is beneath the dignity of a lady of culture. The poorer classes imbibe the same spirit, ignore the various avenues open to them, and thus become an easy prey to vice.

Very few women who are competent and willing to labor are to be found in prisons. Idleness and pride engender vice.

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

In the conduct of a prison three elements are absolutely essential to be combined and actively and firmly enforced—industry, education, and religion.

1. Systematized labor. What shall be the character of the industries carried on in our penal and reformatory institutions? The contract system in a women's prison or reformatory is out of the question, as it destroys or prevents all efforts being made for the reformation of the women, and hence would be in the long run a financial failure for the state. What kind of labor, then, may be taught in women's prisons and reformatories which will aid in the reformation of the prisoners, be the most economical to the state, and least deleterious to the community? Prominent above all and most advantageous in every way are the duties of housewifery. She may and should be taught to do all kinds of housework. In the Indiana reformatory for women and girls, with which I was so long connected, every convict or inmate was required to work in the laundry for the first few months ill-health only exempting. They were patiently taught to do their work well, and when that was attained they passed into another department, from one grade to another, like care in each being taken for their instruction, until at the expiration of a five years' sentence they went forth many of them well drilled in all kinds of housewifery, laundry work, chamber work, sewing, knitting, cooking, proper selection and care of materials, etc., with the means of an honest livelihood in their possession and a kind of labor always in demand.

Many kinds of trades may be taught if they do not involve congregated labor in the shops, for that kind

## RHODA M. COFFIN

of labor takes them back again into an atmosphere full of danger.

2. The reformation of the prisoners being the prime object, anything that will promote that should be laid hold of. Education should have a prominent place. There should be in each department a school for instruction, in which each convict should be required to spend a portion of time daily, the character of that instruction to be such as would meet the needs. The minds of most women who get into prison are almost a blank, or, if furnished at all, they are furnished with rubbish. They do not think or reason. The mind should be instructed and trained to purer thought, how to resist evil, and the higher and nobler purposes of woman should be developed and strengthened.

The last, but not the least, essential element as an important factor in the proper conduct of a reformatory, is religious teaching, the development of a religious life, religious thought, and, as, a consequence, right living. All the means of grace should be provided—chapel services, Sabbath schools, prayer meetings, good reading, and practical Christian women to administer to all their needs. There should be a good library, and free access to it.

This is a partial solution of the great problem, how to arrest this tide of crime among women. And if carried out a large per cent. of that vast number of women and girls who have been before our courts during the last year may be turned from their course of evil and led to upright lives, thus removing from the community a cancer which is destroying the vitals of our state.



## VII

### CHILDREN OF THE STREET; DEPENDENT GIRLS OF TENDER AGE FOR WHOM HOMES SHOULD BE PROVIDED

*(Written by request of the Editor of the Chicago Inter-Ocean, January 25, 1886.)*

CHILDREN of the street, or girls of the street, what can be done for them? 1. There are some dependent children of worthy parents, who, from various circumstances, such as loss of property, sickness, death, etc., have been reduced to a state of dependence or are in a helpless and exposed position, and if some power does not intervene and care for and protect them, they will be almost certain to fall into the snare of the devourer. The zeal and earnestness, the watchful care and large-heartedness of the Christian philanthropist, should be of such a character that these unfortunate girls should be cared for at once, by placing them temporarily either in an orphan asylum, half-orphan asylum, home for the friendless, or some such institutions, until they could be wisely placed in good Christian-loving homes, where they would be received and cared for tenderly, wisely, and lovingly, not for the amount of labor they might perform, or the money they might earn, but for love of humanity. This class should never be placed in any institution that has any taint or is the receptacle of the neglected. Neither should they have the stigma of committal. The class thus alluded to is compara-

## RHODA M. COFFIN

tively small. A very moderate increase in expenditure, perhaps about what has already been done, and not involving a large expenditure of money, may be necessary, but a great increase in earnestness and liberality in searching them out and caring for them is called for. They should never be neglected until forced to become "children of the street."

2. There is another class of young girls who may unhesitatingly be classed "Children of the Street." A large number of young girls, mere children, whose waking hours are spent in the streets, alleys, or in dens seething with vice, impurity, and filth. When at home they breathe continually an atmosphere of impurity. They live in small quarters, parents and children, boys and girls all huddled together, one or both of their parents in many cases intemperate—all things in common, and thus all sense of feminine delicacy is obliterated. Again, in many instances the parents' love and greed for gain causes them to expose their daughters by sending them on the streets as venders of apples, papers, matches, etc., or to beg of the passer-by, or from door to door, and often punishing them severely if not successful in begging, or still worse, to barter their virtue before they are old enough to know what purity or virtue is. This class of neglected children may be counted by the thousands. They have been conceived in sin and born in iniquity. They have received a terrible inheritance, and from present appearances they are cultivating that inheritance with an avidity which will insure successful results of crime and impurity.

And yet there is another class nearer maturity who

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

have already fallen into the hands of the procuress, or the vile monster who would satiate his lust upon innocent purity; for either one of this class of vile monsters I can not find words of sufficient strength and force to express my contempt. I would either banish such villains to some lonely island far away from kith or kin, where they might consume each other, or incarcerate them for life in a prison on the separate system. But their poor child victims, with life wrecked, hope blasted, command our deepest sympathy. There are two classes to be provided for, ranging in each from six to fourteen years. Their surroundings very similar and their conditions in many cases so nearly merging into each other that to undertake to separate them or classify them seems oftentimes a distinction without a difference.

What can be done with them? There are various opinions concerning the problem. A large class of very respectable people turn from these considerations with contempt. Another class of persons who are active, energetic, and philanthropic, who devote much time and thought to stay some kinds of evils, and meet some phases of distress, ignore entirely the thought that a "girl of the street" may be reformed, and sneeringly respond to the suggestion that they may become pure women. This idea is a relic of the Dark Ages and not befitting the light of the nineteenth century. And yet those persons represent a large class of very respectable people, who think the probabilities of success in this work of philanthropy in caring for the "children of the street" depend almost entirely upon the sex, and that a girl who has been victimized, or who has lived in the atmosphere of impurity and crime, or whose life is

## RHODA M. COFFIN

on the street, might just as well be handed over to Satan at once—that for her there is no hope.

There is another class of philanthropists whose labors are untiring, who care for the boys and girls alike. They with their large-heartedness and zeal have reached forth their hands into the great maelstrom of neglect, want, degradation, impurity, and vice, and have gathered them all into their loving arms, and sought to do them good; but in their mistaken zeal some of them have failed in accomplishing their grand and noble purpose. Instead of keeping those untutored, undisciplined waifs in an institution where they would be disciplined and trained and new habits formed, and where they could have been studied and culled, they, after a short preparation, have hurried them out into the country and scattered them almost broadcast in the homes and hearts of the farmers, each child more or less a germ of corruption. Those people with whom they are placed know nothing of the habits of those children, of the vice and ways with which they are so familiar, have but little system in their households, and are unfamiliar with the discipline that is needed, and great harm is often done to those who receive them and the community in which they have been placed. What is to be done? How can they be cared for so as to insure virtue and become a strength to the Nation instead of corruptors? We answer unhesitatingly, it is the duty of the State to provide State schools, to be supported by public funds, and to be controlled by a board of managers composed of conscientious, capable Christian women exclusively, to whose management and care the girls should be committed until attaining majority, with

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

power to arrange, to adjust, to classify, or place in families under their surveillance. After the children have been so drilled, instructed, and trained as to give reasonable grounds to believe their lives, thoughts, and habits are changed, and correct ones established. To most thoroughly conserve this purpose sought for, there should be a receiving building to which all should be sent, there to remain a sufficient length of time to enable the officers to study the characteristics and determine to which class they should be assigned. In different localities there should be erected a number of plain, substantial buildings, built with reference to the needs to be met. These should not contain more than a hundred girls, and would be far better if the family did not exceed fifty, as the more complete the individualization, the more thorough the success, all to be officered by women, and the whole system under one board.

The children should be taught correct habits, purity of thought and action: they should be given a common-school education, and their minds trained to digest the right kind of food and to do the different kinds of housewifery. The discipline should be mild, but firm and full of love. With the right kind of training and conscientious officers much good results may be expected. By this gradation, thus hastily sketched, much of the evil of promiscuous commingling of the classes, which in most institutions is cause of difficulty, may be avoided and a good work accomplished. A large number of each class would be referred or made over, and each becomes a center of influence for good instead of evil.



## VIII

### SOME ACCOUNT OF WORK FOR THE INSANE

ON an occasion when I was called to the Hospital for the Insane, to look after one of whom I was very fond, I was forcibly impressed with the gross neglect of the patients, and the abuse by the attendants; also the absence of careful treatment or effort to restore the patient to a sound mind. I made a very careful examination of the building and the places of confinement. They were too repulsive to relate.

There was almost a total absence of employment for the inmates or anything to occupy them except a few whom it was thought could be trusted to perform the labor necessary for the building. There was also a total lack of reading matter. A friend of mind whose mind was somewhat impaired, though not sufficient to send her to an asylum, but who Dr. Rogers had the courage to refuse to retain and sent her home, said to me: "Mrs. Coffin, if you were forced away from your home and locked up in a ward in the Insane Asylum at Indianapolis, with nothing whatever to do, nothing to sit on but a wooden bench, with insane people howling and screaming all around you, how long would it be before you would go crazy?" I replied, "Not two weeks." Her remarks impressed me with the need of some vigorous measures being adopted for the relief and care of a large number of a class, the most to be pitied of any other.

## RHODA M. COFFIN

When I spoke to my dear husband about it and told him that I was thinking of taking hold of the subject to see if something could not be done for the care and betterment of the insane, not only that some improvements in comforts for them might be provided, and kind thoughtful nurses, but that there should be ample medical attention brought into the service, physicians who should devote themselves to the individual study and the peculiar cause of each, the reply was most natural, "I beseech thee do not undertake anything more, we have all that we can do now"; but, dear good husband as he has always been, he entered into it with great interest. I corresponded with a number of superintendents of hospitals for the insane in other States as to the improvements which were represented as being done in some of the hospitals under their care, as to what could be done to make these institutions more beneficial. From some of them I gained much valuable information. Some suggestions were reported and I was encouraged to press on; but nowhere did I find any effort to place the insane woman under the care of women.

About this period Dr. William B. Fletcher was appointed Superintendent of the Hospital for the Insane at Indianapolis, Indiana, a man of advanced thought who entered upon his work with a determination to do all he could for this most unfortunate class, "the insane woman." In him we found a valuable helper, who with his noble wife took hold of the matter and in a few months made many changes. I enlisted the interest of Dr. Mary H. Thomas, a rare woman, a pioneer in every good work. She was among the earliest women physicians and had endured much obloquy and



## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

much opposition to her profession. With her aid and that of Sarah J. Smith, we undertook to get a woman physician who should have charge of the insane women at the Hospital for the Insane at Indianapolis. Dr. William B. Fletcher was very favorable to the action and said he believed if there were women physicians to care for the women and girls, a large per cent. of them would never become insane. "Women were very sensitive to the exposure of the diseases incident to their sex," he said, "and as a consequences their difficulties were allowed to go on until beyond remedy."

We selected a woman physician of prudence and courage, who had endured much as she pursued her studies, and afterward entered her practice. We presented our request before the Board of Officers with her diploma, backed by unusually strong recommendations, and the Board took the request under consideration. At their next meeting they required a recommendation from each member of the Board at the University of Michigan from which she was graduated. This was procured. The Board had by this time heard that she had taken a post-graduate course in the University of Pennsylvania and required a recommendation from that Medical Board. This also was procured. Then they said, "Ladies, we would like to gratify you, but as you are not voters, we must be just to our constituents, and you must get a petition signed by the leading business men of Indianapolis. We secured this and reported. The next request, or rather demand, was a recommendation from the Governor. I went to the Governor with the request and was given an audience. With many complimentary

## RHODA M. COFFIN

remarks he said he had already promised the position to Dr. Mary Thomas of Richmond. This I knew was false. On reporting my lack of success, she wrote to the Governor, "I have never asked you for the position; my practice is large and I could not afford to take it. I am one of the three who are making an effort to procure a woman physician to have charge of the poor unfortunate creatures of my sex." Of course the only way out of his dilemma was to give us the recommendation, which was taken with great speed to the Board in session, and it was compelled to employ a woman physician, but confined her on a small salary to two visits per week, and to board in the city, however, "the camel had its head in and it was not long before it drew its body after it."

I came out of that contest a full-fledged woman suffragist. If a vote was necessary before I could succeed in getting a woman physician to care for the helpless of my sex, I decided that I must have a vote. About this time the Legislature of Indiana passed a bill for the erection of three new hospitals for the insane, and the Governor of the State of Indiana commissioned my husband and myself as we were about to go abroad, Delegates from our Government to the "International Congress for the Protection of Childhood" to be held June 12, 1885, and to inspect the modern hospitals in England, Scotland, and France, the three countries that had made the greatest advance in the treatment of the insane. We accepted the commission. In France we obtained but few ideas that would be of much avail in our country. In England we were treated

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

with the greatest courtesy and saw much to admire. From each hospital we received some new suggestions which might be of use to us. The "Cheadle Asylum" near Manchester, England, had adopted the Cottage System with only twenty to fifty in a building, and these made as near like homes as possible. The buildings were scattered over the county, some by the sea-side, some in the interior. The patients were transferred from one point to another for change of scene and air, some were in private families, and all of the patients were under the direct supervision of the Board.

The patients spent much time out of doors, no bars or locks were visible, and attendants were provided in large numbers, who mingled with them. There was nothing to denote their position or authority. Employment was given to each individual a portion of the time; birds, music and various kinds of games, and a good library was placed within the reach of all.

In Scotland near Glasgow, we found the system in greatest perfection. Men were engaged in farming, using various needful utensils without harm. The women were employed in housekeeping, sewing, needlework, the care of flowers, birds, etc. There was no visible system of restraint. They were guarded by attendants, but the patients were unconscious of being guarded. The condition of each was studied and their needs sought to be met. We were delighted with what we learned both of methods and results, and when we returned to America laden with suggestions and hope of reform, Dr. Fletcher, his wife and daughter Agnes, came to Richmond to visit us and gathered from us all

## RHODA M. COFFIN

we could give them for the development of their work in the Hospital for the Insane at Indianapolis. We were all enthusiastic. Enthusiasm is absolutely essential for any reform. We needed this, for the work which laid before us was gigantic, but that noble man, Dr. Fletcher, was ready to stand back of us, and being the head of the Institution he had the power.

At his request I went to the hospital to consult as to what could be done. In passing through the worst ward called "The Bloody Six," owing to the extreme conditions of those poor miserable creatures, I noticed some of them picking the walls with pins, and upon examination found some of their figures quite artistic in form. I suggested for a good starting point that blackboards should be made in the walls and crayons furnished for their use. The result was remarkable. Many of them were interested, others were delighted and showed considerable talent. Of course the efforts of some were quite crude and others grotesque. But it furnished occupation, interest and amusement, and awakened thought. Mrs. Fletcher advertised in the papers for toys, particularly those that were old-fashioned; the thought was amusing at first. I procured a lot of toys, some of them out of date, from merchants who were liberal and much interested. I purchased four dozen dolls and a variety of goods to dress them. My directions were that they should be clothed so as to be dressed and undressed at the recipient's will. The work was to be done by the convalescents. This work afforded them great pleasure and beguiled many weary hours. When the dolls were taken into the ward to be given out, they brought great delight even to

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

those who were thought to have little reasoning power. One of the patients whose mind was farthest gone, dressed and undressed her doll using all the material of a baby's wardrobe, and at night with its nightgown on she took it in bed with her, laid it close to her bosom, and called Mrs. Fletcher to see it nurse, showing that motherhood never dies as long as life lasts—a beautiful thought, and still a more beautiful manifestation of it.

For some of the old and feeble-minded patients, yarn and knitting needles were purchased at wholesale prices, and when the stockings were knitted they were sold and the profits given to them. They knit with great diligence. Meanwhile they were taken out walking and taught to gather leaves and dry them to decorate their rooms. For Christmas they decorated the rooms beautifully and prepared a motto to put over the doors, "She brings sunshine when she comes in," meaning Mrs. Fletcher, they said.

A kindergarten was started later. The result was most happy. Instead of screaming and yelling to the distraction of the neighborhood, "The Bloody Six" was quiet and orderly, and when I went in they all vied with each other in showing me the room.

At Christmas, Dr. Fletcher removed all the restraints and made a bonfire of them. The patients were allowed to witness the flames as they ascended from the pile as it was being consumed on the campus while they sang "Praise God from whom all blessings flow," and as long as Dr. William Fletcher and his wife and daughter Agnes remained at the Institution there was great improvement in the comfort of the patients. Mrs.

## RHODA M. COFFIN

Fletcher was a model officer; she entered upon the work as a Christian mother, keeping in touch with the patients, seeking to do all that she could for their improvement. I have visited many hospitals for the insane but never met her equal. I feel this acknowledgment is due her as I had the privilege of seeing her inner life and work as perhaps few others had.

We succeeded in getting one of the new hospitals for the insane to be in some measure conducted on the Cottage plan, but I removed from the State before the completion of the project.

It is most remarkable when I think of how difficult it is to educate the public mind to the need, as well as propriety, of women to care for their own sex who are helpless or insane.

An eminent physician who was fully in harmony with the work, added his testimony to that of Dr. Fletcher, that he was fully satisfied in his own mind, that if women physicians were to have the care of women and girls there would be comparatively few women found in hospitals for the insane; that most of them were there from some disease peculiar to their sex, and their natural timidity and modesty prevented them from submitting their case to men physicians, until they were past cure.

It was but little that we succeeded in accomplishing. My husband and a few other men did all they could to aid us. Our mite helped to swell the current and may yet become the mighty river that will bring blessing and comfort to many women.

After our removal to Chicago we became much interested in The Cook County Hospital for the Insane.

## IX

### THE HOSPITAL FOR THE INSANE AT DUNNING AND THE COOK COUNTY INFIRMARY, ILLINOIS.

IN 1884 we removed to Chicago and found a most interesting field of work. Shortly after our arrival two ladies, members of the Women's Club which had been organized several years before as a literary club, called to ask me to attend a club meeting and open the discussion of a paper on Elizabeth Fry, giving some account of her family and work, which I consented to do. I found an earnest body of ladies among whom were physicians, lawyers, doctors, artists, and philanthropists. They elected me a member of the club. I entered a field of great interest to me and I trust of profit to them. They felt that the time had come to extend their efforts for the benefit of women and children. Men were then not expected to be present at the club meetings, but my husband freely worked with us outside. We had worked together as one in a large portion of our efforts for the benefit of mankind, so we now sought the opportunity for the continuance of our invited effort.

In company with several noble women, Mrs. J. D. Harvey, Mrs. Sledel, Dr. Julia Holmes Smith, Dr. Hunt, Dr. Sarah Hackett Stephenson and others, together with other women physicians, we visited the County Hospital for the Insane, and found it in a sad condition, the inmates herded together promiscuously, very few chairs for the feeble, the pro-

## RHODA M. COFFIN

visions for them to sit on being long benches built in and around the walls, or to sit upon the floors, and when they ate they crowded about with pieces of food in their hands. The table and the dishes were a disgrace. There was but little chance for them to rest or to work. They had simply to exist. This was in 1886. A great interest was aroused for their betterment and comfort.

There appeared to be almost a total lack of attention or care for the restoration to a sound mind and healthy body. The importance of a woman physician to look after the poor diseased ones, helpless and hopeless, had been quite overlooked. The idea was if one was "crazy" she was done for; if she made an appeal "she was just crazy," if she told of horrible treatment, "Oh, she is crazy"—"we cannot put any reliance in anything she says"—and thus all were passing her by. We felt thoroughly in earnest to try what we could do. By an earnest appeal to the Board of Commissioners we secured more windows, better ventilation, hundreds of chairs, some lounges for the very feeble, canary birds to sing, pictures,—simple though they were,—gave some cheer, made arrangements for the cultivation of flowers, furnished newspapers, collected books and magazines from our friends for a library to interest and occupy their minds, and finally the employment of a woman physician. They did not take to her. We were at a loss to account for that as the Principal was a sweet faced lovely woman thoroughly interested, and neatly dressed.

The revelation came in a peculiar way. Dr. Florence Hunt invited some of the ladies to lunch with



## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

her one day and wore a very becoming black satin dress. True to her duties she passed through the wards. The inmates rushed around her in the greatest delight exclaiming "Ain't she pretty, Oh, ain't she pretty? Won't you wear that all the time? We like you, Doctor." She promised if they would do as she told them she would wear it all the time, and faithful to her promise she humored them and her trouble ceased. When we visited the Institution they asked "Have you seen our pretty Doctor?" There came to us through this incident a revelation, the need of surrounding the insane with the beautiful. Experience shows that music is a great power in the restoration of the insane to a sound mind. Dr. Clouston of Morning-side Hospital for the Insane near Edinburgh, Scotland, has laid hold of and proved the value of this fact. The ladies of the Women's Club are still doing much for this hospital.

We directed our attention to the Cook County Infirmary; great need for improvement was found on every side. There were many who should be kept in employment, the larger portion were lounging around gossiping and quarreling and most of them were quite able and would be much better off and more comfortable with some employment.

Owing to failing health I was obliged to retire from the work but not until women physicians for the female patients in the hospitals, and for the women in Cook County Poor House had been employed. The work is still progressing. The county is now interested and further efforts are being made to improve the system. It is now (1908) about to build a new improved infirmary.



## X

### THE HOME MISSION ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN OF INDIANA YEARLY MEETING.

AFTER the great meeting held by the young Friends, during the session of Indiana Yearly Meeting in 1860, there sprang up in the minds of many a conviction that a more thorough, active, aggressive work was needed. To accomplish this it was thought necessary to have an organization free from Church trammels, one so formed as to be adjustable to the various needs.

Women Friends were not accustomed to special organized effort among the women, and in our church organization there was but little for the younger portion of the members to participate in. The voice of a woman in church action was rarely heard in expression of a personal opinion. The usual manner was "I unite" or "I am free," and never, I think I may say, to evolve a system of organized work, which should bring out the energies of the younger portion of the members.

Much life had sprung up, and many had received Christ and heard the command, "Let your light shine," but there was little opening. The women Friends were earnest, but timid, some of them frightened at their own voices and fearful to take hold and step out into a new field. Something must be done. The new life received, the new zeal kindled would dwindle, and thus the Church and the world would be deprived of this vast amount of spiritual energy.

An association had been started in England, led by

## RHODA M. COFFIN

Rebecca Thursfield, with whom I had corresponded for some time. This work, though small at that time, was the subject of the correspondence. John Henry Douglas and Murray Shipley, while on a religious visit to that country, had mingled in that work, and were ready to throw in their mite to strengthen the few women Friends on whom the Lord had laid the call for organizing in our field.

These women were Harriet Steer, Sarah J. Smith, Mary J. Taylor, and Anna M. Pugh of Cincinnati; Elizabeth Hopkins, and myself. After much thought and prayer for guidance and wisdom, we finally decided that the "set time had come," and met for prayer and action at our house one morning during the Yearly Meeting of 1866. We invited Murray Shipley, Charles F. Coffin and John Henry Douglas to meet with us. A constitution and by-laws were drafted, the names of the officers were selected, and the names of Friends from all the quarterly meetings were selected to act as correspondents, whose duty it would be to organize in all the monthly meetings. It then became a question as to how to get the meeting called so that it would not be hampered by Church restrictions. We requested Elizabeth L. Comstock, who was a minister from Canada Yearly Meeting, to call, or appoint, a meeting for women to consider the subject, to which she agreed, the meeting to be in the large old meeting-house.

Just as we were going into the meeting she said to me, "I am afraid to call the meeting without consulting the elders." I was much annoyed. Everything had been arranged for the meeting, and I knew that consultation would kill it.

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

With an intense burning in my soul for the advancement of the work, and all absorbed in the purpose, and fearing that I was about to break the rules of the Church, I knelt down by one of the benches in the porch, and, taking an old envelope and a pencil wrote, "A meeting will be held this afternoon at 3 o'clock in this room for the purpose of organizing a Women's Home Mission Association of Friends. All are invited." As I was at the table as assistant clerk and the announcements were always read by me, I read it with the other announcements. We invited J. H. Douglas, Murray Shipley and C. F. Coffin to meet with us and give some information as to the needs of a constitution and by-laws. An executive committee and the name of a woman Friend from each quarterly meeting as correspondents were selected to have charge of the work by awakening an interest and as far as possible to organize monthly meeting associations.

We met at the time appointed and found seven hundred women assembled. Speakers had been selected to speak for the work. The association was organized by electing Rhoda M. Coffin for president, Sarah J. Smith, secretary, and Elizabeth Hopkins, treasurer, and correspondents were appointed as selected, the names of whom are to be found in the annual report.

It was a meeting of much interest. A membership fee of \$1 for annual membership, and life memberships of \$25 was agreed upon. Mary J. Taylor, Anna M. Pugh, and Rhoda M. Coffin became life members—thus providing funds for the necessary expenses. It was a wonderful meeting. The women were ripe for

## RHODA M. COFFIN

the work and took hold with much interest, joyful to have the opportunity to labor for Christ. Our men Friends present gave to us words of encouragement and experience.

The work done the following year was remarkable: Cottage prayer meetings were held, Sunday Schools organized, jails, prisons and poor houses visited, tracts distributed, and meetings started.

One woman Friend, as she thought of what she could do after she went home, took a horse and a little son riding behind her, carried a bag of tracts and started out on her mission. She found one school district where there was no Sunday School or place of worship. She went from house to house, giving tracts and talking with the people, and praying. She procured the use of the schoolhouse; others joined her in tract readings, cottage prayer meetings, and distributing Bibles. The people were delighted, and soon much interest was manifested. Gershum Purdue, an elder of advanced age, but full of love to his fellowmen, was one of the faithful workers. Others, both ministers and elders, lent their help to the work, a protracted meeting was held, and a large number were converted and joined the Friends. A meeting was established.

Work of a similar character, but not to so great extent was done for six years throughout the various quarterly meetings, all under the care of the Women's Home Mission Association. At the end of these years it was thought best to invite the men to participate, and the Yearly Meeting to adopt the work. The proposition

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

was brought before the annual meeting for consideration. It at first met with considerable opposition.

Whilst the women were far behind the men in the commencement in practical united work, now they were far in front. The field had become so large and important we felt it should receive the united energies of the Church. The men needed the revivifying influence of active mission work, and the Church needed it. After a time of prayer it was unanimously decided to invite the men to participate and the Church to assume the work.

The following minute was forwarded to the men Friends, then in session:

“The Home Mission Association of Women Friends of Indiana Yearly Meeting, which was organized by the women members in 1866, and has been zealously and efficiently prosecuted by them, resulting in the conversion of many to Christ and great benefit to the Church at large, and the field opening for successful labor, women Friends have decided that the time has fully come to invite men Friends to co-operate.”

The proposition was joyfully responded to, and a large assembly met. We re-organized, and officers and an executive committee composed of men and women Friends from each of the quarterly meetings was chosen. I then resigned the presidency, which I had held from the beginning, as I had quite as much as I could do, and wished as soon as possible to take up another line of work, the needs of which had been developed during

## RHODA M. COFFIN

the years of active service. Levi Mills was appointed to the position, and was most efficient.

The following minute was then forwarded to the yearly meeting in session Tenth month 7th, 1873:

“To Indiana Yearly Meeting:

“The Home Mission Association, which was organized by Women Friends in 1866, and has been so zealously and efficiently prosecuted by them, resulting in the conversion of many souls and great good to the Church, desires to inform the yearly meeting that the work has become so great and the field opening up for labor so extended that women Friends have thought it right to call upon men Friends for their assistance and support in the home mission work. In response to this call a new organization has been effected—officers and an executive committee chosen of men and women Friends from each of the quarterly meetings, who are now ready to prosecute the work. Believing as we do that in unity there is strength, and desiring the united sympathy and prayers of the entire body, we suggest to the Yearly Meeting that it recognize our association as one of the standing committees of the Yearly Meeting and that we report annually to the Yearly Meeting the result of our labors.

“LEVI MILLS,

“President of the Home Mission Association.”

The meeting agreed to the request and directed an annual report to the Yearly Meeting. Of the results and remarkable success in the many years of labor we are all familiar.



## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

Thinking it might be of interest to some of later years, who may wish to know something of the rise and organization of the Home Mission Association of Friends, as at first organized and put into operation, and being in possession of the facts I have written a short account showing the result of the first organized effort of women in Indiana Yearly Meeting for carrying out the teachings of Christ.

Of the six women Friends on whom this work was laid, five have passed over and are receiving their reward, whilst their labor continues to follow.

I have been permitted to remain and enjoy a foretaste here. I know my race is nearly run, but, full of faith and love, I rest, knowing that I am safe in the arms of Jesus.

11th month 5th 1903.



## XI

### THE RISE OF FOREIGN MISSIONS AMONG FRIENDS AN HISTORICAL PAPER.

I HAVE been much interested in the article on "Foreign Missions," written by Mahala Jay, and have been led to think, that some information in regard to the first inception of the Foreign Mission Work and its beginnings, might not be out of place by one who was closely connected with its first movements. In this article I desire to show the Providences of God in the unfolding of His will and leading therein, and the great result following by faithful obedience to the Lord's call, as illustrated by Rachel Metcalf of England, Louis Street and his wife Sarah T. Street, of America, and Samuel A. and Gulielma M. Purdie of Mexico, which has resulted in not only the establishment of Missions in India, Madagascar, and Mexico, which have been grandly successful, but the arousing of Friends everywhere from their apathy and the thorough awakening of a general and personal interest, as well as the formation of a Foreign Mission Association in all the Yearly Meetings of the Society of Friends, and the establishment of Mission stations in Syria, Palestine, Constantinople, Japan, China, Alaska, and Jamaica, besides a number of Stations in Europe and some in Africa.

It was the privilege of my husband and myself to

## RHODA M. COFFIN

be brought into close connection with the movement in its earliest stage amongst Friends, hence I have thought that there might be those interested in some account antecedent to hers. In order to fully estimate and value the courage and faith of those noble pioneers, as well as those who came to their aid, it may be well to take a hasty survey of the condition of the Church, at that time, and the causes that led to the work. In the early history of the Society we find Friends, full of earnestness in the spread of the Truth, ready to suffer persecution and even death, that they might promulgate the knowledge of God by preaching the Gospel. But after persecutions had ceased, the fiery zeal, which had been even to their *enemies*, a cause for admiration, became almost extinct for more than a century. The Church turned its attention to building the walls around it to protect the fold within, rather than in obeying the *command* of Christ—"Go ye into *all the world* and preach the Gospel to every creature." As a result, the Church became absorbed in itself, zealously guarding its fold against ritualism and display, and everything that was thought to tend to fascinate the minds of its members or draw attention from the true source of Light. It unconsciously fell into another error. So strict and rigid were its rules, and binding its forms, that individuality was lost, mental activity suppressed, spiritual life and liberty curtailed. And that Church, which had been so full of mental activity, of spiritual life, of missionary zeal, of holy devotion to Christ, boldly marching to the stake in honor and defense of His cause, became unconsciously, and almost

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

imperceptibly, a dead, formal body absorbed in itself. Darkness and feebleness settled upon it. Its power, once so strong, became paralyzed. True, there did arise here and there, persons who were filled with the Holy Ghost, who sought to convey the message of salvation to the unsaved, and in a measure to those without, by directing the minds of their hearers to the need of salvation through the blood of Christ. In the midst of this gloom and dearth there were praying ones in the Church, praying for life, light, and liberty. God heard those prayers, and answered, and about the middle of this century, began moving upon the hearts of His people. To the honest seekers after Truth he revealed himself, and as they were able to bear it he brought them "out of darkness into the marvellous light and liberty of the Gospel." As they multiplied, and were obedient to God's call, they aroused others. In a quiet sort of way they moved, for the main body of the Church was not yet prepared for an active aggressive work. But the spirit of the Lord was at work. While He was preparing a heart here, and one there, to go forth with the message of glad tidings to heathen lands, He was also preparing the way. In 1860 He began to move upon the hearts of Friends, and there was a great awakening in some of the Churches in America and England, to more active service in their own midst. In 1865 one lone woman, Rachel Metcalf, heard the call to heathen lands and prepared to answer "Here am I, send me." She yielded to the call for service in India amongst the women and children. She was a decided Friend, and wished to go as a *Friend*. She laid the subject, with her consecration, before her friends

## RHODA M. COFFIN

in England. The Lord had called her as a pioneer to lead the Church in *that* place. A few Friends before whom she presented her mission had been prepared for the purpose by Him who has a right to rule and to whom we owe service. Feeling the magnitude of the work and faint hearted yet they dared not refuse help. A little band met and organized themselves into a "Provisional Committee," and pledged her support. This was the commencement of the work in India which has grown to such large proportions. The Lord prepared the worker's heart full of Christ's love, and clothed with His power. He prepared the hearts of those who had the means to aid her and made them willing to contribute for the prosecution of that service. He went before her and prepared the way, and the work has prospered and continues to expand. Its influence has been increasingly felt as time advances, and many are to-day rejoicing in Christ. And to Rachel Metcalf, led by the spirit of God to consecrate her life and go forth bearing the precious seed, courageously and faithfully doing the Master's will, is due the foundation of that great work, which has been, is, and will be, a great blessing to India as well as to England. All honor due her name.

Simultaneously with this work of preparation for India the Lord had laid his hands on Louis Street and his wife, members of Indiana Yearly Meeting, U. S. A. for another work. For years Louis Street had felt *he* was called to labor in Madagascar as a *Friend*. In the winter of 1865-6 one evening he called on my husband and myself, and brought the matter to our attention, stated he knew nothing about *how* he was to

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

go. He and his wife had prayed over it. They had two young children and saw not the way to leave, or to take them. He had consulted with two other friends and now felt the time had come for him to take some steps. In correspondence with our English Friends, we knew of the effort of a few Friends to aid Rachel Metcalf, and accordingly suggested that he should write to one of them to inquire of The London Missionary Society if it would send him, he being a Friend. When the matter was fully brought before the Friends in England with the letters from Louis Street, and a letter of recommendation from a few Friends at Richmond, Ind., they decided to invite him and his family to England in the latter part of the year 1866, that they might more easily open the way for them. They set sail for England 12 mo. 1st, 1866, but were shipwrecked the same night by a collision at sea and both vessels were lost, but the lives of all on board of both ships were saved. They were taken off the next day and brought back to New York; however, the work to which they were called was not frustrated. The Lord had a great purpose in calling them out not only to bear the message of glad tidings to that dark land, but through their devotion, to arouse the attention of the whole Church to the needs in heathen lands, its duty and the part it should take in supplying that need. Undaunted by the perils through which they had passed, and sustained by the promises of God and the abundance of His grace, again they set sail 12 mo. 8th, and after a stormy voyage landed in safety in Liverpool, where they were most cordially received by Friends. The Meeting for Sufferings in London took hold of the

## RHODA M. COFFIN

matter, became much interested, eventually appointed a large committee to aid in the development of the cause and to fit them out with supplies, etc. Everything seemed most propitious for the beginning of a Friends' Mission in Madagascar, under the care of London Yearly Meeting separate from other missions. But as the matter advanced it became evident that the Church was not prepared to go further in becoming responsible for the work. It was decided to not act officially, as a Church, and Friends withdrew from its *official* promotion, but not from *financial* support and interest. The subject was referred back to the Provisional Committee. Robert and Catherine Charleton of Bristol feeling it their duty to render efficient aid, entered heartily into sympathy with the subject, and with the parents in the exceedingly difficult problem as to what was the best disposition to make of the two dear little boys who were too young to leave, or to take, were finally led to the conclusion that it was their duty to take the children to their hearts and into their home and supply their needs while the parents went forth to labor for Christ in Madagascar. For twelve years most nobly and successfully did they perform this excellent service. The presence of Louis and Sarah Street in England, their sacrifice of everything for the privilege of laboring for their Lord in that dark field, that they might be the means of winning for Him many of those who were sitting in darkness, aroused a great deal of interest amongst Friends in England, who liberally furnished them with everything that was necessary for their support, and many prayers followed them as they bade



## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

farewell to their dear children and sailed under the auspices of the Provisional Committee, from Southampton, 3rd mo. 1, 1867, in the Cape Steamer for Madagascar. They arrived at Antananarivo, Madagascar, 6 mo. 1st, 1867. They were accompanied by Joseph S. Sewell, an English Friend and Minister, who, animated by their zeal and devotion, was led to join them in the work. These Friends became the founders of Friends' Madagascar Mission. Previous to this, there does not appear to have been any interest, or arrested thought towards Madagascar as a field for service for Friends, and there is no reason to believe or suppose that there would have been a Mission founded under Friends' care, were it not for the ready response of Louis and Sarah Street to the call of the Lord, their faithful obedience, their entire consecration, and their willing sacrifice. For twelve years they labored most successfully. As pioneers they had much to endure, but they had the joy of remaining to see a great work established, which has continued with increased, and still increasing force, until it has become a power amongst the people. Others have followed on taking up their labors. During the following summer after their departure for Madagascar, the Provisional Committee in England resolved itself into a Friends' Foreign Mission Association. The work has expanded and grown, most liberally supported by Friends, but not yet embraced by London Yearly Meeting in its official capacity as its Church Work.

As we have traced the providence in the lives of our dear friends, we have been almost lost in wonder as we have noted, how the little incidents of life, have been instrumental, in directing and influencing their lives,

## RHODA M. COFFIN

and the lives of others, but when we take into cognizance the indwelling Christ in their hearts, their consecration of soul, we no longer wonder that all things are made subservient to the mind and purpose of Christ, for the carrying out of His will in us, and by us, and through us.

We have seen the effects wrought in England by the humble submission and response to the call of the Lord by our dear friends. Let us now retrace our steps to Richmond, Ind., and follow the influence wrought on those left behind, and some of the results.

. . . . Our dear friends Louis and Sarah T. Street had been one with us. They were members of Richmond Preparative Meeting; they had laboured with us in our large mission-school, and in all of our church work, and the aroma of their sacrifice was left behind, as a sweet savor of love to Christ. We felt its power, and that we had a part in the work; when met together for worship, prayers always ascended for them, and as soon as they were settled in Antananarivo, collections by the women were taken up amongst Friends to aid Sarah T. Street in her work amongst the women and children, and for the supply of her personal needs. The mission-school in which they had been teachers, composed largely of poor children, entered with great spirit into the effort, and the first year contributed sixty-six dollars for that purpose. Friends had never been accustomed to giving largely for *any* purpose. The simplicity of their worship, their dress and manner of living, had a tendency rather to contract the mind and lead to self-absorption, and the education of the Society up to liberal giving was a difficult and tedious

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

process. But this *must* be done if the Church measured up to the requisition of our Lord to bear the Gospel to heathen lands. The mission of our friends was like a new light and opened up a new life amongst us. The letters from Louis Street and his wife were read with great interest, and whenever Friends were met together their mission and their letters became the absorbing theme. And soon the thought would present itself, is this an individual work only, or have we not as a Church a part to perform? It was like the leaven hid in three measures of meal; and as their letters, so full of missionary zeal and so vividly portraying the conditions in Madagascar, were read in different assemblies, collections were taken by the women from time to time, and ere long the Women's Indiana Yearly Meeting began making appropriations for Sarah Street. Men Friends followed, and for several years contributions were made to aid Friends in England to sustain their work in Madagascar. The amounts were small but the wedge had entered. In the 6th month, 1867, Francis W. Thomas and Charles F. Coffin, in conversation, decided to call a few friends together for the purpose of organizing for work. A Friends' Foreign Mission Association was the result, composed of Francis W. Thomas, Charles F. Coffin, Joseph Cox, Levi Jessup, Micajah C. Binford, Murray Shipley, Harriet Steer, Rhoda M. Coffin, Elizabeth B. Hopkins, Mary J. Taylor, Charlotte Davis, and Hannah M. Johnson, with an annual membership fee of one dollar, and life membership of twenty-five dollars. Mary J. Taylor, C. F. Coffin, Murray Shipley, and R. M. Cof-

## RHODA M. COFFIN

fin became life members, thus forming the basis of a missionary fund; Murray Shipley was Secretary. Our first year was largely spent in familiarizing ourselves with the work of other missionary societies, procuring all possible information, correspondence with our friends, making small collections and talking up the subject. On 10th mo. 3rd, 1868, we held our first public meeting, in which was manifested a good deal of interest, new members added, collections taken up,—for this was a most important matter; for no people will sustain a continued interest in a subject without giving pecuniary support. Correspondents were appointed in all the Quarterly Meetings to organize auxiliaries, and awaken an interest in foreign missions, collect funds, and overcome prejudices against paying missionaries. The people were to be educated up to the obligation resting on them towards the heathen lands. The mission of assisting English Friends in the support of the Madagascar Mission and the supplying of Sarah T. Street with personal funds was continued and prosecuted with increasing effort. Very soon we began to receive applications from Friends to go as missionaries to different countries. It was all of the Lord, all useful to us, widening our views, giving us a broader comprehension of our needs, more faith that we were rightly called, more material with which to interest others, and preparing us for the work which the Lord had in preparation for us; and thus we labored, cultivating a missionary interest, developing the spirit of giving, until the winter 1870-71. Our services not appearing longer greatly needed to aid our English Friends, we felt that

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

the time had fully come when we should look towards establishing a mission under our own care which we fondly hoped might ultimately be adopted by Indiana Yearly Meeting as its work. It required no little faith, for our funds were small, and nothing certain to be relied upon. During the first year our friends Elkanah and Irene Beard, who had joined us, felt called to India, and left us for that field in 1870, under the Friends' Foreign Mission Association of England. Much interest was awakened for them, and collections to aid Irene Beard were taken up and forwarded to her. At our winter meeting we instructed our secretary to put a notice in the "Friends' Review," asking any called to foreign mission service to correspond with him. This brought response from several Friends, amongst them our friend Samuel A. Purdie, who was then living in North Carolina, stating that he had felt called to devote his life as a missionary in Mexico, and references were given. All the responses to the inquiries made were satisfactory. A correspondence was opened which continued for months. We had no mission. Our courage almost failed: where would the funds come from? He had no experience, neither we. We presented the Freedman, the Indians, the foreign fields under the care of our English Friends, but to all this he responded, "My call is to Mexico." We prayed for guidance and light. It came in a letter received from him, narrating his call, the efforts he had taken to prepare himself by studying the Spanish language, and engaging in work of a missionary character. We invited him to meet us at our house in Richmond, in the latter part of the 9th mo., 1871. All the members of our board were present, with two younger Friends

## RHODA M. COFFIN

who had joined it—Timothy Harrison and Charles H. Coffin. After a season of earnest prayer, and a thorough examination as to his call, the grounds of his faith and his ability to clearly present the Gospel, we became fully satisfied that the time had come to “launch out” and start a mission in Mexico. He was engaged and sent out, and in two months was on his way to Mexico. Of his call and of his entrance upon the work, I will let him speak by introducing a letter lately received from him in response to inquiries made:

“From my earliest childhood the maps of Mexico, Central and South America had to me an attraction not possessed by any others. Among my childhood visions of fancy, S. A. Purdie was to be the Stephen Grellet of Spanish America. I would plan in fancy voyages on the Orinoco and Amazon, and among the Andes, and through Central America, and in the land of the Montezumas. A genuine Spanish-American preacher as a travelling companion, the fruit of my labors was the expectation which filled my mind with satisfaction. In the fall of 1870, having just returned from New York with an invalid wife, and with the hope that her own native climate and the light care of a home only as wife of a teacher would improve her health, whilst a vast field of ministerial labor opening there before me would require my attention, a sudden, unlooked-for impression of a call to work in Spanish America entered my mind. A week or two later it seemed clear that it was no passing thought, but a ‘leading of the Spirit.’ I sent seventy-five cents to D. Appleton & Co. for a Spanish grammar, about the end of September of the year 1870. I call

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

attention to the date, for just one year later I was at your house in Richmond and received the approval of the Foreign Mission Committee for the work. About April, 1871, Murray Shipley had a notice in the 'Friends' Review,' asking any called to foreign mission service to correspond with him. I had previously had some correspondence with Thos. Williams, of Huntsville, Texas, and thought of teaching the colored school there whilst journeying toward North-eastern Mexico, toward which my thoughts principally directed themselves; but the notice of Murray Shipley led to my opening correspondence with the Foreign Mission Committee and to come as their missionary. Whilst at Richmond, John D. Miles, after I was appointed, laid before the Yearly Meeting the appeal of Mexicans to Friends to send them missionaries. I wrote, prior to meeting with the committee, to Jos. Holdrich, the Secretary of the American Bible Society asking as to open fields in Mexico, and he specially recommended Victoria, Mex. All the missionaries in Mexico at once accorded Tamaulipas as a Friends' mission field. Thus I hastily sketch down the steps leading me to Mexico. About February, 1871, I first met Juan Leon, at the Port's Mine, three miles from our home, and with him conversed in Spanish leaving him a Christian convert, with my Bible to study. He subsequently married a young lady who professed religion in a revival which preceded a few weeks my attendance at Indiana Yearly Meeting in 1871. We have now a six months' meeting composed of five monthly meetings, and have four native recorded ministers, four unrecorded, and many other native workers."

## RHODA M. COFFIN

Samuel Purdee landed at Matamoras in the latter part of the year, and essayed to go on, as we see his mind had been towards Victoria, but the Spirit hindered, and in response to what he believed to be God's guidance he commenced, with his feeble wife alone his helper, to found the Mexican Mission under the most adverse circumstances, with an inexperienced church at his back only partially awake to its duty, without experience himself, with but little funds with which to carry on his mission, few would have had the courage to persevere. His wife, fully in sympathy with him, joined him in the work. She started a school for the children, a movement which has resulted in the establishment of a girls' school at Matamoras. They deprived themselves of the necessities of life and lived in the most frugal manner. The Lord had gone before and prepared the way, and they seemed to scarcely have sown the seed until the harvest was ready for the reaper. They taught a day-school and a Bible-school. They started a meeting, begged a printing-press, did the printing largely themselves, and soon began to throw broadcast Spanish literature of a religious character, portions of the Bible, etc.; all of which was eagerly read, and tended largely to disseminate the truth as believed by us. They passed through riots, scourges of yellow fever, small-pox, earthquakes, and storms, never complaining. The funds were slow coming in, and had it not been for the younger members of our association, Timothy Harrison and Charles H. Coffin, who were younger and more energetic, who sent hundreds of letters, to England and throughout our own land,



## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

seeking to awaken an interest and securing funds, and who oftentimes when there was no money in the treasury supplied it themselves out of their own means, our mission must have come to an end. The story became an old one. Friends grew weary of continuous giving. They had not become accustomed to it, but the interest increased in the work at Matamoras. Very soon a little church was gathered of converts to Christ; men and women of intelligence embraced the truth and desired to become Friends. A form of church government, a concise discipline fitted to their conditions and surroundings together with a basis of Christian faith, was prepared and sent to Samuel A. Purdie, and a church was organized. Elders and overseers were appointed, ministers who had given evidence of their call were recorded, and the church multiplied, and other stations were formed, school-books prepared and printed, other books translated into Spanish and issued from their press. The Lord abundantly blessed their labors and the mission, and the pressure to sustain it was a great blessing to the church at home. During the summer of 1873 we gladly accepted the services of our young Friends, Micajah M. Binford and his wife, who were most acceptable to Samuel A. Purdie, and rendered efficient service in the publishing department, teaching, and conducting the church work, etc. But it soon became evident that his wife could not endure the climate and they were forced to return. In 1874 we felt that the church was prepared to take hold of the mission as a church work. The mission was fairly organized, with a day-school, a Bible-school, a

## RHODA M. COFFIN

printing-press, and a meeting organized of seventeen members. A proposition was prepared and forwarded to our Yearly Meeting, which resulted in its adoption, as shown by the following minute, 10th month, 6, 1874:

“The subject of foreign missions was presented by reading the Third Annual Report of the Friends’ Foreign Association, and the response was as follows:

“The proposition that this meeting should adopt the work of the Association was considered, and in view of the duty of the church to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, it was the judgment of the meeting it would be right to accept the proposition. The Friends named in the report are appointed a committee on foreign missions, and also the correspondents in the quarterly meetings, and are directed to continue to give attention to that interesting work, and report to next Yearly Meeting. Our subordinate meetings and members are desired to contribute liberally to the support of the work, and forward the funds to Charles H. Coffin, treasurer of the committee.”

This was a source of great rejoicing to the committee. Our position was now changed. Indiana Yearly Meeting had accepted the mission and assumed the responsibility, and we took our place as a committee under the supervision and guidance of the church. As we review the work we see the hand of God in it all.

## XII

### THE RESULTS OF GENERAL GRANT'S INDIAN POLICY AS SHOWN BY THE WORK OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS AMONG THE INDIANS.

*Read at a meeting to consider the Indian Missionary work, held in Chicago, 7th month, 26th, 1885.*

AT the first yearly meeting held at Richmond, Indiana, 10th month, 1821, the subject of the duty which Friends owed to the Indians was considered, having been introduced by a communication from Ohio Yearly Meeting of Friends asking its co-operation in the work. The subject was referred to a special committee, which reported as follows: "Having met, after a time of deliberation and a free interchange of sentiment, we unitedly agree to report that the subject, under the present aspect of things is too interesting to be suffered to fall to the ground. We therefore propose that a committee of men and women Friends be appointed to co-operate with Friends of Ohio and Baltimore Yearly Meetings in carrying the plan into effect which has been proposed by Ohio Yearly Meeting, but that our committee thus appointed have no power to make requisitions of a pecuniary nature on the members of this Yearly Meeting." By these minutes it appears that Ohio and Baltimore Yearly Meeting had been previously engaged in some work for the Indians among the Shawnees at Wapakoneta, and that Indiana Yearly

## RHODA M. COFFIN

Meeting, thus early in its infancy commenced a work in which it has labored untiringly for sixty-four years. Its efforts may not always have been the most wisely directed but nevertheless faithfully and earnestly performed has been the labor.

The civilization of the Indians seems to have been the prime object. To effect this, schools were established by Friends sent out to live with them, a farm was secured and great efforts put forth to give them a common school education, and teach them how to cultivate the soil.

For many years the results were small. The Shawnee Nation occupied their attention for fifty years with varying success. A Friends' Meeting was held, a family of Friends residing on the farm and caring for the children and looking after their education as best they could until 1870, when we learned from the report to Indiana Yearly Meeting the whole affair had dwindled down so low that the government sold their lands and dispossessed them. Their efforts up to this time seem to have been almost futile.

About this period, General Grant, the greatest military leader in our country, was elected President of the United States. The vexed question, What shall be done with the Indians? met him on the threshold of his administration. It was he who "conceived the thought of a course of National conduct toward the Indian race, marked by peace, honor, justice, and Christian kindness."

To carry into execution his great plan of subduing and controlling those wild men by benevolence and justice instead of the sword, he summoned the religious

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

element of America to his aid. Friends, who had always been in the front ranks in their earnest efforts and sympathy for the Indians ever since the time of William Penn's treaty with them, responded to the call. The orthodox Friends on the continent of America are divided into ten bodies, or "Yearly Meetings," united together by correspondence. Each of these bodies, or "Yearly Meetings," appointed committees which resulted in the union of all, and the formation of the "Associated Executive Committee of Friends on Indian Affairs."

According to the original plan of the President, Friends nominated the agents, who, as they were approved by the government, were appointed to the different stations. Thirty thousand Indians were assigned this body of Associated Friends, consisting of the following tribes and parts of tribes, viz.: Kiowas, Camanches, Cheyennes, Arapahoes, Senecas, Kaws, Osages, Wyandottes, Ottawas, Pottawatomies, Shawnees, Quapaws, Sacs and Fox, Iowas, Modocs, Tonkawas, Mexican Kickapoos, and some of the Cherokees. To look after the interests of those tribes and parts of tribes included in the assignments, to civilize them, and seek to make them, not only good citizens, producers instead of absorbing, self-supporters instead of paupers on the government, but Christian men and women, imbibing the benign influence of the Gospel and showing forth the spirit of a Christ life among their neighboring tribes as well as among the low class of whites who were continually annoying them, and also to show to the world the possibilities of the Indian becoming a law-abiding

## RHODA M. COFFIN

citizen, was the mission assigned to Friends. Agents were nominated known to be in sympathy.

Schools were established among the different tribes, missionaries sent out, not only to teach them in school education, but to go from tent to tent, and from tribe to tribe and tell them of the glad tidings of salvation through Christ Jesus; to hold public meetings among them, and in every way possible to open their minds to the fact that Christ came to save the Indian as well as the white man. Others directed their efforts to teaching them manual labor—to plow, to sow, to plant, to reap, and to gather into their garner the fruit of their toil. This was difficult to effect, as the men had always looked upon labor as degrading to men, and fit only for women and children. But by the example of those noble men who hesitated not with their own hands to work, and thus dignify labor in the eyes of those for whom they were toiling, much has been achieved. This was an important point to be gained, for the work of reformation with any class of people can not be effected without industry. To supplant the love of the chase with a love of systematic labor and a pride in the result, was the Herculean task which has been accomplished with marvelous results.

While one class of missionaries were thus engaged others were seeking to expand the mind and enlighten the understanding. Children were gathered into schools and taught, revealing a fact hitherto disbelieved, their remarkable susceptibility to receive instruction. Eager to learn, men and women came forward to take their places as scholars. The work of education has progressed, increasing in interest. There are now six

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

governmental boarding-schools, one industrial training-school, besides a number of day schools under the care and direction of said "Associated Committee" [1885]. Two young women and one young man (natives) are now employed as teachers. The Osages and Kaws have established an order requiring all children from seven to fourteen years of age to be kept in school eight months in the year, or forfeit their share of tribal annuities. Seven hundred pupils have attended these schools the past year, and one hundred of them have professed faith in Christ. A pretty good showing.

The third branch of their work among the tribes was the spiritual. Men and women were found who, counting not their lives dear, left their homes and friends, and under the auspices of the association commenced the greatest and most important part of the service—the revelation of the love of God in Christ Jesus. The Indians, with their original belief in the "Good Spirit," were willing to listen to the Gospel, and gradually the Spirit's work began to be manifested in their ranks. Children were sent to the Sabbath schools: the stolid indifference of the chief men of the tribe gave way to strong convictions; strong men bowed before the Lord in intense wrestling for His pardon; proud chiefs, humbled before the Lord, rejoiced in pardoning love; weary, heavy-laden, toiling women laid their burdens down at the feet of a complete Savior; young men, proud in the strength of their young manhood, yielded themselves to the cleansing power of the blood of Christ; little children heard and received and entered into joy; young women joined the ranks of the children of God. An abundant harvest appeared.

The plowing of the native soil by the gospel plow,

## RHODA M. COFFIN

the faithful sowing of the seed of the kingdom, mingled with tears, and a holy life has been blessed by the Great Husbandman. The songs of the war dance have given place to the songs of Zion, the scalping-knife to the sword of the Spirit. Their gospel quivers filled with arrows of divine love, are being sent forth as messengers of blessings. Hundreds of the Indians have been converted to God, laid aside the panoply of war, and clothed with Christ's righteousness have girded on the weapons of his warfare, and are now engaged in active battle against sin.

Churches have been organized in different parts of the territory, officered and conducted by Indian men and women. Several ministers of the gospel have been called of God and set apart by the church to preach the gospel. Marriages are solemnized in the churches, according to the order of Friends. Bible schools are held where old and young congregate to hear the words of life and to learn of God's law. House-to-house visitation, performed by native men and women who themselves have been saved. Temperance societies have been organized, and among some of the nations are found their most earnest and able advocates. What has wrought this great change among those wild men of the forest?

A union of three forces—industry, education, and religion—have combined under God's blessing, and have caused that great desert in God's creation to become a fruitful field. The blanket has been exchanged for the civilized dress, the chase has given way to settled homes, and now may be seen broad acres of well-tilled soil, good farm-houses, pretty well kept, the family



## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

all sitting at table, and the woman in the place of honor as the acknowledged mother of the house, and the father ministering before the Lord in their family devotions, and the children under family regulation and discipline, affording a wonderful illustration of the power of the gospel of peace.

The most remarkable and successful work is that wrought among the Modocs, a strong, bloodthirsty tribe, full of deceit and cunning, fortified in the strong fastnesses of the Rocky Mountains. They resisted the United States Government successfully, while many of our soldiers and officers lost their lives in trying to subdue them, but without avail, until forced to surrender by failure. They were assigned to Friends, and placed under the immediate care of two of the most successful of their missionaries, Asa and Emeline Tuttle. On first removal many of them died, but soon under the loving ministrations of that devoted couple they began to yield to God, and the work of grace continued until nearly every member of the tribe has been converted to God. Having become convinced of the peaceable nature of Christ's kingdom as accepted and believed in by Friends, they made public profession of their faith by joining that body, and have become strong advocates of peace and exemplify it in their daily lives, a striking illustration of which may be given in an incident which occurred a short time since. One of their young men was killed by a low, unprincipled white man on the border. It was a most provoking murder, without cause. The young men began to paint and prepare for revenge, when "Steamboat Frank," a Friend and a minister of the gospel of great power,

## RHODA M. COFFIN

hearing of their purpose, sent for them and said: "Brethren, we are soldiers of the cross and therefore can not fight; leave it to God who will avenge." The effect was magical. They dispersed to their own homes, taking no further steps to revenge their brother's blood.<sup>1</sup>

To all of the above tribes and parts of tribes have the labors of Friends been extended and the gospel has been preached, and the educational and industrial

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<sup>1</sup> The story of the Modoc Indians is an interesting bit of history.

It was a tribe, not numerous—about 300—that inhabited a stronghold in the lava beds of the northern mountainous regions of California, roving about and committing atrocities upon the white settlers, and were a constant menace to life and property. They were thoroughly wild, crafty and barbarous.

Finally in 1872, the United States Government, to put an end to the friction they caused, laid a firm hand upon them. For many months the Federal soldiers were powerless to quell their murderous raids, the Indians secreting themselves in the impassable niches and caves of the lava beds. In 1873, under command of General E. R. Canby, a United States Officer of distinction, they were surrounded by troops and through starvation were dislodged. While engaged in making terms with them under a flag of truce, Captain Jack the ringleader, shot and killed General Canby and Dr. Thomas. This act, as a matter of course, greatly enraged the Federal troops and many of the Modocs were killed on the spot. Captain Jack was hanged. The tribe was afterward removed entirely away from their old haunts to the Quapaw Indian Reservation in the Indian Territory, where Friends established a mission among them with the results as stated by Mrs. Coffin.

One of the most interesting school exhibits in the Educational Department of the World's Fair in Chicago, 1893, was the advance in education and perfect school work by these Modoc Indians and their children.

M. C. J.

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

influence exerted to a greater or less extent. There are now fifty-four Friends as missionaries engaged in carrying on this work. And this has been accomplished as the great result of that grand scheme which emanated from the noble mind and heart of General Grant, to whom our country owes so much, and whom all nations are now honoring: who, in the midst of his triumphs at the height of honor and position, with all nations loud in his praise, found time to turn aside from that glory and stoop to lift up the most degraded of his subjects, and throw around them the hallowed influences of the gospel of Christ, whereby they might have the opportunity of being lifted up to equal dignity and honor God, "and joint heirs of Christ."

It is not ours to speak of the heroism of General Grant on the field of battle, nor of his success as a military general, nor even his magnanimous conduct toward the conquered, but to hold up prominently before the world as the crowning act of his great life and the one to which Christians and philanthropists will alike point with gratitude and pride, this grand conception of the correct and successful solution of the Indian question. During President Hayes' administration the power to nominate agents was withdrawn and politicians took their place, many of them inimical and but few in sympathy with the work. This has greatly hampered the efforts, notwithstanding, the work is progressing with increased success. And the grandchildren of General Grant will live to see the Indians endowed with the inalienable right of full citizenship as the result of their noble ancestor's grand scheme.



## XIII

### WOMEN OF THE ORIENT

THE first thing that attracts the attention of a traveler, upon entering the Orient is the condition of the women. In Egypt their degradation is very great. Hundreds of women may be seen working on the canals, on the streets, digging the dirt with their hands, putting it in baskets and then bearing it away to the place set apart for it. Crowds of them may be seen sitting on the sides of the streets with but little clothing on them, and that so filthy, tattered and torn that it would be impossible to tell what had been the original texture, their babies rolling by their sides in the dust under the rays of a broiling sun, many of them having scarcely ever been washed, and the flies literally covering them. The women of the better class all wear lamba's, very much resembling a sheet form, composed mostly of bright-colored silks, occasionally an elderly woman may be seen with a black one, but owing to the intense heat, these are not desirable. The lamba is thrown over the head, brought down low over the forehead, and fastened under the chin; a girdle passing around the waist confines it in rather a graceful manner, leaving the arms and hands exposed, which are tattooed and covered with jewelry. A veil, mostly of black silk, is fastened just beneath the eyes, by a coil which extends down the forehead securing the lamba and veil in their proper places.

## RHODA M. COFFIN

No Moslem woman or girl would dare to go out on the streets unveiled, or permit a man to see her face, as they would be sure to receive a scourging by their husbands or fathers. The women are very ignorant, being treated by their husbands with far less kindness and attention than they would give their favorite dog.

“The Moslem men are nervously afraid of having their wives and daughters taught to read or write,” said a Mohammedan to one of the Missionaries who was urging him to permit his daughter be taught. “What! teach a girl to read and write, why she will write letters, she will, I know, actually write letters.” This was reason enough in his mind.

They paint around their eyes, their lips, finger-nails, etc., with henna. They wear large rings in their ears and their noses, and on their fingers, and many bracelets on their arms, and around their necks are massive chains; they wear short stockings and long red pointed shoes.

Missionaries are doing a noble work in Egypt in the elevation of women, and a better day is dawning upon them. Miss Whaley has for several years been conducting a school for girls with great success.

The Syrian women, or the women of Palestine, are but little better in position, but perhaps not so low in habits of life. The Jewish women wear white lamba's and veils of goods very similar to our printed lawns, through which they can see distinctly, but which obscure their faces from public gaze, and when seen on the street and by the wayside, in the groves, and by the tombs, they appear ghostlike, but rather picturesque

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

than otherwise. They spend much of their time sitting or lounging in these places. Not having their minds cultivated, and a very narrow range of thought, they follow the example of the men and gossip; a low type of filthy conversation occupies much of their time. When traveling through that land and observing the domestic life of the women one does not wonder that the Apostle wrote, advising "that the women be keepers at home." We thought if he were there now, he might with propriety issue a new epistle.

They are all lazy, both men and women, and do as little work as possible, and yet what little is done, is done by the women. They are married very young, from ten to twelve years old, having been bartered away by their fathers, perhaps in infancy. As soon as their husbands tire of them, which is sure to be sooner or later, they are made to do the most degrading work. Hundreds of them may be seen gathering manure and carrying it to some vacant lot where they sit down on the ground, roll it in dirt, make it in cakes, dry it in the sun and then bear it home on their heads for fuel. Fuel is very scarce and these go out over the mountains gathering brush, tufts of grass, and whatever they can find. They may be seen coming over the mountains with large burdens on their heads, almost covered beneath it, ragged and wretched, bearing scarcely any resemblance to a woman.

The Bethlehem women are a grade higher; are more nearly white, wear a head-dress covered with coins, and a white thin veil thrown over it. Their headdress is usually an inheritance, descending from mother to daughter, and is highly prized. The coins of which

## RHODA M. COFFIN

it is composed, all bear the same stamp, each row of the same size. It is considered a great disgrace to lose one of these and the loss irreparable, hence in the parable of the woman with the lost coin, her trepidation and diligence in her search, and her joy in finding it. Their dress, similar to the men's, is a jacket and wide skirt with a drawing string at the waist and closed at the bottom, with holes through which the feet pass; these are clothed with the red pointed shoes. They are all very fond of jewelry and wear it whenever they can. It was very comical to see babies without any clothing, at most one loose slip, laden with jewelry.

Education is doing much for them. Dr. Thomson, the author of the "Land and Book," who went to that country from Cincinnati, and who has done much for the people, told us that when he first went to Palestine between forty and fifty years ago, there was scarcely such a thing known as a woman or girl who knew her letters; now the education of the girls has become almost a mania, the fathers pressing their daughters into the schools. As a money-making measure, when educated they bring a higher price for wives. They are sent to the Mission Schools under the care of our noble Missionaries where every effort is made to bring them to a knowledge of Christ. They learn very readily, are very susceptible, and many of them are converted while in the school. They are taught to sew and something of our civilization, and many heartrendering instances occur, when having tasted of better things, they are ruthlessly torn away from those whom they have learned to love, and given over for a wife to a man, worse than a



## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

brute, who ofttimes, the first thing he does is to give her a good scourging "to break her of her foolishness," as he says. We saw some very touching instances of this kind, and yet down in the soul there still lingered faith in the Saviour they had learned to love, and hope as an anchor to the soul buoyed them up.

Their dwellings are built of stone, some eight to twelve feet high, and covered with sticks and brush; over these earth is placed about a foot thick, and heavily rolled: this work is done by the women, and on a rainy night, you may see the lights the women carry as they moved about on the tops of the houses, stopping up the cracks lest their liege lords should get a wetting. The houses, which vary in size from 6 by 8 feet and some as large as 10 by 20 feet, have no windows, a dirt floor on which the fire is built, without any way for the smoke to escape, excepting from the low door. They have usually an elevated platform on one side, on which the family sleep. Their bedding mats much resemble Persian rugs. On rising in morning, these are rolled up and set to one side. It was this kind of a bed which the man, when healed by Christ, at his command "took up, and walked." Their food is of the simplest kind, only one vessel in which it is cooked, then with spoons they gather around to eat: the dishes are soon washed, and the house put in order. This is the condition of the women as we saw it while traveling in that land.



## XIV

### THE NOBLE LIFE OF SARAH J. SMITH, A WELL-KNOWN QUAKER PHILANTHROPIST.

*(An obituary written soon after Mrs. Smith's decease.)*

December 18, 1885. Sarah J. Smith, of world-wide fame and a great philanthropist, is no more. She quietly folded her arms and fell asleep in Christ at the residence of her daughter, Mrs. William J. Hiatt, at Dublin, Wayne County, Ind., on the morning of the 17th,<sup>1</sup> after a grand and noble life of more than three-score years and ten, full of faith in her Redeemer, to enjoy the completion of her faith and the fruition of her hopes. She was one of the women of the age, one of those special characters brought forth for the advancement of the Nation from one epoch to another. Vice-President Hendricks of Indiana, said in speaking of her remarkable powers: "God Almighty never made another Mrs. Smith"; and Governor Conrad Baker,—now of sainted memory—a man of rare virtue, and, like Mr. Hendricks, a noble example of domestic purity and marital fidelity, and a great believer in women's ability and her advancement—said of Mrs. Smith, "She is the most wonderful woman of the age, prepared by God especially to lift up the fallen and lead women on to higher purposes and broader fields."

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<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Sarah J. Smith died December 17th, 1885.

## RHODA M. COFFIN

Mrs. Smith was surpassed by none in the breadth of her philanthropy—her active benevolence, the scope of her charity, the strength of her integrity, the breadth and length, and depth, and height, of her love to God. The result was a life of self-sacrifice in her labors for the alleviation of the sorrows of human kind. Born and reared in England, she received the benefits of the education and family training which is the charm of English homes, the cultivation of the love and study of nature in the animal, vegetable, mineral and floral kingdom, a training which so beautifies the English family life. She had a love for art, literature, and poetry, and a strong compassion for the suffering of the millions living on the lowest scale of human life. She dived into the lowest depths and brought up to clearer light many sparkling jewels.

The recital of Elizabeth Fry's remarkable work for the prisoners in the London Bridewell, and on the English prison ships, left an impression on Sarah J. Smith's susceptible mind which was afterward the basis of the wonderful fruits of work of like character in her own life.

When she arrived at the age of maturity she married James Smith, of Sheffield, and thither removed, and for years was devoutly engaged in the beautifying of her home, the happiness and interests of her husband, and the training of her children. Hers was a beautiful home life, presided over by a cultured, Christian woman. Because of declining health and unable to endure the climate they were forced to leave their native land and seek a home on western soil, coming to America they settled near Milton, Wayne County, Ind., on

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

a farm. This was a new experience, but she was quite equal to the situation. She brought into her new sphere not only the lovely example of a Christian home, but untiring energy and zeal for the comfort and advancement of others. She gave a strong impulse to the advanced education of children, and illustrated the possibility of a farmer's wife devoting some portion of each day to the cultivation of her own intellectual powers, thereby being fitted for the culture and training of her children.

She was deeply interested in the progress of education, in the establishment of Earlham College at Richmond, Ind., under the auspices of Friends, and in the development of the present school system of Indiana.

She was a member of the Society of Friends—a Friend by conviction, converted to God through Jesus Christ in childhood. She was early called to the ministry of the gospel. That call was recognized by the church and for more than fifty years she faithfully preached the Word with great success throughout the United States, and in England, giving the powers of her life to the work of the church. She visited hospitals, and the prisons of this land as well as in her native land, erring women's homes, and all kinds of institutions where sorrow was found. She once visited all of the public institutions of benevolence in Chicago, also the county jail and Bridewell. While visiting the county jail she attempted to hold services with the women. Prayer had been offered by another lady. When Mrs. Smith began to speak they thought to stop her by their noise and confusion. She ceased speaking, and kneeled in prayer. She was always most powerful in prayer.

## RHODA M. COFFIN

She seemed to grapple the throne of grace and to bring the hope of mercy. They were subdued, and for hours afterward she labored in the prison with great success. As she went about bearing aloft the torch of God's love and the hope of salvation, she sought to enlighten the homes of the poor and unfortunate by making them attractive with books, music, and pictures.

Her attention was especially directed to young men, encouraging them, warning them, praying for them, and when they fell by the way and were in the hands of the law, she would herself go on their bonds, pay their fines, and thus show practically her interest in them. Hundreds now, as "brands from the burning are filling honorable, useful lives, and rise up and call her blessed.

When the Civil War broke out in 1861, and the groans of the wounded went up as a great wail over our land, her warm and sympathizing heart responded to the call of distress. Although exceedingly delicate and feeble physically, full of faith in her Lord whom she believed had called her, she went forth accompanying her friend, Mrs. Elizabeth Comstock, who was a noted worker in field and hospital, for our brave soldiers. From fort to fort, and camp to camp, close in hearing of the roar of battle, oftentimes so near the engagement that bullets would pass all about them, they might be seen with lint and bandages and restoratives passing among the wounded and dying in the hospitals, ministering to the suffering, whispering words of comfort, and pointing them to Christ as "One mighty to save." Many most touching incidents Mrs. Smith would in

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

after years relate from her storehouse of memory. She knew no difference in color or creed. Wherever she found sorrow she ministered to it. Her attention was directed to the large number of colored orphan children, made so by the war, and who, amid the strife, were dying by hundreds through neglect and starvation. She succeeded in procuring the use of barracks near Helena, Ark., and was ultimately successful in securing a permanent grant of several hundred acres on which has been established a school, from which have gone forth hundreds of young colored men and women as teachers of their own race. This she placed under the care of Friends. Thus she labored, forgetful of self, until her health failed, and she and her faithful husband who was always by her side, returned home as she thought to die,—but God ordered otherwise.

Scarcely was her health restored when there came a call of a different nature, one which proved the beginning of the crowning work of her life. As a result of the war homes were devastated—immorality, the accompaniment of war—increased fearfully, children were neglected, and it was felt that something must be done to save the boys. She gave herself to this work with great enthusiasm, and went with a company of men and women of like spirit to the capital. There she labored until no one individual had greater influence over the minds of leading men in the administration of the moral government of the state. This work accomplished she was called to Indianapolis to aid in the organization of a work among her own sex who had departed from virtue. They closed her quiet

## RHODA M. COFFIN

home from which the children had all married and gone to homes of their own, and went as Mrs. Smith thought only for a short season, to begin an organized effort—the establishment of a Home for the Friendless in Indianapolis. Here she remained until called to take charge of the Woman's State Reformatory of which she had charge about nine years. To this work, which required so much courage, she was quite equal, courageous in times of danger and fearless under conviction of duty, she went down to the lower depths. She penetrated into dark recesses and grappled alike the sin and licentiousness in both men or women. With quickness of perception, warmly sympathetic, generous to a fault, she was just the one for the position.

Passing on the street one day she heard the muffled cry of agony from a little child, and peeping through the keyhole she saw a little girl of six years of age in the hands of a man who was ravishing her; quick as thought with Herculean strength, she broke in the door, rescued the child, took her to the Home and cared for her, had the man prosecuted, and on her testimony he was convicted. While on the stand his attorneys tried to confuse her, but instead of confusing her she only took fresh courage, and turning to the jury she gave such a forcible testimony, appealing to them as fathers, that they gave a verdict before they had scarcely left their seats, which caused his conviction for twenty years in the State prison.

A young girl came under her care to be nursed who at the age of thirteen years had been seduced by her employer, a leading public man of the State who was



## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

a great admirer of Mrs. Smith's ability. She first secured all the evidence of his guilt, which the girl had in her possession, and then sought an interview with the gentleman, laid the matter before him for counsel without revealing the fact of her knowledge of his guilt. He entered into it with interest, and assured her of his assistance. When about to depart she said, "Thou Art the Man, and I will act as thou has suggested." Of course neither of these men were admirers of Sarah J. Smith afterward. One is still in prison; the other should be.

Some of her coadjutors with whom she worked for years in the same field of benevolence, having ascertained the fearful corruption existing in the Jeffersonville State prison, in which the women criminals of Indiana were incarcerated, Mrs. Smith's whole nature was aroused to action and she was foremost in efforts to meet the demand for a reform. She never rested until a Women's and Girls' Reformatory was established at Indianapolis, and at the earnest request of the Governor of the State and the Board of Managers, she was induced to take charge of and start the Institution, hoping for some one to follow when the "coming woman" could be found. In the spring of 1869 the Reformatory was declared ready for the reception of the women of the Jeffersonville State prison, the most hardened, debased, and undisciplined of women, scarcely a vestige of womanly instinct in them. As the carriages containing the prisoners drew up before the door, Mrs. Smith stood in the doorway dressed in her Quaker costume, which she always wore, with snow-white cap and handkerchief, and with a fine physique and noble

## RHODA M. COFFIN

beauty, her handsome face, as she stood, feeling the responsibility of her position and the work before her, she was illuminated by a sacred light direct from the Holy Spirit under whose inspiration she was then acting. The first prisoner was brought in by four stalwart officers manacled hand and foot. Under the reforming influence of the Institution, and Mrs. Smith's care, this woman has led for fourteen years a meek, humble, self-denying life.<sup>2</sup>

This case is an illustration of Mrs. Smith's power over evil, of her government, and of her tact. For thirteen years she toiled, and suffered, and endured, counting nothing too dear to be given up for the reformation of those coming under her care. Successfully she solved the problem, Can women prisoners be reformed, and How can it be done? Over 80 per cent. of those who have been under her care are leading upright lives in their sphere. Her name and fame has gone abroad throughout the length and breadth of the civilized world. In the "International Congress for the Protection of Childhood" held in Paris in 1883, when her name and work was mentioned, the whole congress rose to its feet spontaneously in reverence and recognition of her work. The Rev. Dr. E. P. Wines, in his book on Prisons, speaks of her as a model prison officer—"the best in the world."

While her heart was all aglow with compassion for those under her care, she was firm in discipline and

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<sup>2</sup> The story of this prisoner is told in Mrs. Coffin's account of the "Origin of the Women's Prison and Girls' Reformatory" in Indiana. Page 149.

## ADDRESSES AND PAPERS

those who would not yield by the gentle ministration of love were obliged to yield by a more severe method. She did not pamper them, she only showed the beauty of holiness and the possibility before them, and gave them such discipline as would enable them to accomplish it. They knew in her they had a friend and many of them loved her dearly. She had her weaknesses—all strong characters have—and no one was more conscious of them than she, and if she were speaking to-day she would say, “Look not at the instrument, but away from me to Him through whose grace I am what I am.” She had enemies. Some of them pursued her with a zeal worthy of a better cause. They called for an investigation. The gates of hell were opened against her; the contest was headed by the man who had been the seducer, and a man of exceeding licentious habits, and their witnesses were from houses of prostitution. She came forth clearly vindicated.

Her husband who was much her senior, was her faithful support and wise counsellor. Failing in his health, she retired from the Institution to which she had given the best of her life, and faithfully nursed him until his death. The long strain of nursing, and the separation from one to whom she had been so closely united, was too much for her sensitive nature. A decline was soon evident, and although so enfeebled, her interest in the Reformatory was unabated, and continued to the last. Her final illness was short. Full of faith in her Lord she took leave of earth and all its pleasures, and triumphantly went forth to meet the Lord.

Thus I have sought to give a faithful portraiture of one of the most remarkable women the world has

## RHODA M. COFFIN

produced, a full, rounded character, filling with equal devotion her position as a wife, mother, friend, and benefactor. It seems fitting that such a life should thus be portrayed as an illustration of the powers of womanhood.

## ANCESTRY



## ANCESTRY

As far back as is actually vouched for by Colonial records, the main root of the Johnson family began its growth in Virginia in the seventeenth century. That the ancestral line of descent to which Mrs. Rhoda M. Coffin belonged, was among the very earliest colonists of the counties of New Kent and Henrico, [1634] on the James river, and Middlesex on the Rappahannock, in lower Virginia, and later scattered themselves over the part of the State, which became Hanover, Louisa, Amelia. Campbell and adjacent counties, the public and parish records make very clear. This, however, was not the origin of the family in America.<sup>1</sup>

The writer fully concludes after patient and careful research that the first progenitor, John Johnson, came into Virginia with the Scotch-Irish movement from about Charleston, South Carolina, and that his fartherest back American lineage could be traced to an ancestral inheritance with that people.<sup>2</sup> A critical observation of

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<sup>1</sup> The original grants of land which lay in the counties in which their plantations were located proves this fact.

<sup>2</sup> I very much regret that the short time allowed before the publication of this work does not admit of further interesting research.

## RHODA M. COFFIN

the names in the Virginia colony reveals the close relationship with their more southern neighbors, and the intimacies and intermarriages were, almost without exception, all with the well-known Scotch-Irish families from Charleston and its vicinity, the Massies (Massey), Lynches, Campbells, Clarks, Johnsons, and others. These, and adjacent Virginia counties were governed by, and bear the names of Scotch-Irish governors, Drysdale, Dinwiddie, and Goochland for Governor William Gooch.

“Fiske<sup>3</sup> says: “The ‘Scotch-Irish have played a much greater and more extensive part in American history than has yet been recognized. There was hardly one of the thirteen colonies upon which these Scotch-Irish did not leave their mark.

“From the earliest immigration of the Scotch-Irish into this upper country the development of the colony was not as in New England from many distinct settlements, but from one central point—the town of Charlestown.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> “Old Virginia and Her Neighbors,” by John Fiske, Vol. II, p. 319. I consider John Fiske the most correct and reliable historian of our American colonial period than any other writer. In these pages I shall freely draw from his valuable work, “Old Virginia and Her Neighbors,” in reference to conditions and points which touch our historical and genealogical narrative.—*The Editor*.

<sup>4</sup> “Hist. of South Carolina under the Proprietary Government,” 1670-1717, p. 6.



## ANCESTRY

“In 1634 this Virginia colony was organized into counties and parishes. A few of the oldest counties arose from the spreading and thinning of single settlements. This was particularly the case in James City and Charles City Counties,<sup>5</sup> and the counties above named.”

“The whole general complexion of South Carolina at this early period as regards religion and politics was strongly Puritan. Perhaps one-fifth of the people may have belonged to the Church of England which was established by the Proprietary Charter and remained the State Church until 1776. The English parish with its church wardens and vestry, and clerk, was reproduced in the Virginia colony.”<sup>6</sup>

The parish register of Christ Church, Middlesex, extends back<sup>7</sup> to 1653, and St. Peters, New Kent county to 1680-1787. The local habitations of the Johnsons from the middle of the seventeenth century were in these parishes. The parish registers and the Vestry Book of St. Peters, 1682-1728, contain numerous families by the name and names of collateral families.

The following are records of the grants of land to John Johnson:

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<sup>5</sup> Fiske, Vol. II., p. 39.

<sup>6</sup> Old Virginia and her neighbors.

<sup>7</sup> St. Peter's in New Kent Co. was founded in 1653, Christ Church, Middlesex Co., in 1666. From “Old Churches and Families in Va.” Vol. I., p. 383-386.

## RHODA M. COFFIN

Grant to John Johnson, 150 Acres in ——— Haven parish County, Lower Norfolk, formerly granted by patent to said Johnson 24th of November 1657 and now the 20th of October 1661 renewed. (Patent Book 4, page 516.)

Grant to John Johnson 155 Acres in James City County, South on a small branch of Arthur's hope creek, North another branch, East upon the Creek and West by a great swamp. Land granted by patent 25th of March, 1654, and now renewed 18th of March, 1682. (Patent Book 5, page 165.)

Grant to John Johnson 737 Acres 145 poles in the Freshes of the Rappahannock river on the South side of Occapason Creek, bounded on land of William Hall, M. Moseley's and Augustine Blithenbird, near Lawson's Island, land formerly granted to John Barrow by patent 23rd of March, 1659, and sold by Barrow to the said Johnson. Date 10th of December, 1663. (Patent Book 5, page 290.)

Grant to John Johnson 400 Acres in Lower Norfolk County on the West branch of Elizabeth river near the mouth of Goosecreek, bounded partly on land of John Nichols, 300 Acres of which was formerly granted to Mr. John Hill, by patent of the 29th of May, 1649, and by deed and assignment to William Nichols and by Wm. Nichols sold to Jno. Johnson as by the records of the said county more at large may appear and the 100 Acre residue, due by and for the transportation of two persons into this colony, 23rd April,

## ANCESTRY

1688. John Whitehall & Thos. Kelly, the two persons. (Patent Book 7, page 651.)

The Vestry Book of St. Peter's parish shows that Robert Ellyson [Ellison], John Johnson, William Johnson, and Thomas Massie, all ancestral forefathers of the generation to which Mrs. Coffin belonged, were vestrymen and active in church affairs for a period covering a full half-century or more, and were unfailingly punctual at the vestry meetings; indeed, they were leading figures in the colony as evidenced by the personal records.

"The vestry in those times exercised the chief authority in the parish. It apportioned the parish taxes, appointed the church wardens, acted as overseers of the poor,"<sup>s</sup> and performed other special offices. The parish records show that the salaries, charities, and most of all the business of the parish was paid in tobacco.<sup>9</sup> At the vestry meeting, "August Y<sup>e</sup> 24, 1751," Robert Ellyson and William Johnson were appointed a committee to divide lands that belonged to the church into twenty precincts. John Johnson and Captain Massie received a like appointment for which service they were to be paid 1260 pounds of tobacco.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>s</sup> "Old Virginia and her neighbors." Vol. 2, p. 36.

<sup>9</sup> "Parish Vestry Book of St. Peter's," 1682-1728, p. 213.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 137.

## RHODA M. COFFIN

It is to be noted that the footprints of all these families are on the early records as slaveholders. The slaves belonging to them are registered by name in the parish books by the score. It is especially interesting to note records like the following:—

“Betty, a negro, belonging to Capt. Thomas Massie born August y<sup>e</sup> 15, 1728.”

“Jim, a slave of Captn. Thos. Massie born ——— 1708.”<sup>11</sup>

In some instances the name of a child born to the master occurs the same year and is in the same list with the slave. During a period covering much of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Johnsons and their near kindred held slaves; even after the families of another generation had united with the Quakers there are “disownments”<sup>12</sup> on the Friends’ records of lineal descendants who had scarcely given way to the “testimony” and rules which the Society had gradually but finally declared for the freedom and rights of the individual black man.

There is nothing on record to evidence that these Ancestors had any extensive communica-

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<sup>11</sup> “Parish register of St. Peter’s.” In 1696 the clergyman’s salary was fixed by law at 16000 pounds of tobacco.

<sup>12</sup> “Our Quaker Friends of Ye Olden Time” by J. P. Bell, p. 149.

## ANCESTRY

tion with the world, though their settlements lay on the beautiful James river, the York, and Rapahannock rivers, and were not distant from the Chesapeake Bay. It is not disclosed that they became notably worthy of fame. They were respected personalities in the church as the personal records make known. The general character of the colony was high and "stood for educating the white population, morality, and religion." The lives of the landholders were devoted much as were the lives of all Virginia planters of "Ye olden Time" to social, domestic ties, and to their plantations worked by their slaves. Tobacco was the great product and commodity for all commercial exchange. After the generations of those with whom the Quaker records make us acquainted, they were, with few exceptions, staunch and faithful Friends.

The tide-water section of Virginia during the first century of its habitation by these early ancestors was a heavily wooded wilderness. The usual method of passing from one point to another was in open sloops and canoes on the creeks and rivers, and walking through the forests. At some seasons of the year they could journey through the bogs and swamps on horseback. In the month of February, 1714, Thomas Wilson and James Dickinson, two Quakers, making for

## RHODA M. COFFIN

the Friends' Settlement, landed on the Rappahannock river and went ashore at Queen Anne's Town and passed over to York river, then "took our saddlebags and great coats on our shoulders and traveled afoot several miles."<sup>13</sup>

The Indians had not yet moved onward toward the setting sun. The Quakers did some missionary work among them.

The year the Johnson families became Quakers is not made clear. There were scattered unorganized meetings of the Friends in this part of Virginia at an early period—1678. James Dickinson—mentioned above—visited the York river country and Kent county in 1691, and writes in his journal, "A meeting was settled from that time."<sup>14</sup>

One Joseph Newby, a Quaker evangelist, came from North Carolina into the settlement near the close of the century, or early in the eighteenth century, and like John the Baptist, lifted up his voice in the wilderness, disclosing a Deity in such fervor and power and with so much intensity of heart that a sweeping conviction reached the hearts of his hearers and convinced a large number of the inhabitants that the spiritual standard,

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<sup>13</sup> "Southern Quakers and Slavery," by Weeks, p. 79.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 80.

## ANCESTRY

beliefs, and principles of the Quakers were right. It is stated through tradition that the larger proportion of the then sparse population became members with the Quakers, and were afterward the founders of the earliest *organized* Virginia meetings.

So little is known of the personal history of the first John Johnson of whom we have record we cannot give exact dates concerning him. It is evident that he was born about the middle of the seventeenth century, but whether or not in Ulster or in the Charleston district of South Carolina, we cannot now say. He was a faithful and active member of the Established Episcopal Church in the Virginia colony.

The tradition has been that the head of each successive generation in this particular line of descent we are now tracing was named John Johnson.

The authenticity of this tradition is not to be doubted, since it is borne out as far back as church and manuscript records give evidence. But it is not possible until further research is made, to unravel from the earliest documents and records the complicated threads which definitely individualize the first progenitor by the name of John. In the parishes of New Kent and Middlesex Counties, there lived two men by

## RHODA M. COFFIN

the name, both of whom were born, as we have already stated, the middle of the seventeenth century. These men were evidently kinsmen in blood; the one "married Mary Broadbent,<sup>15</sup> 22d November, 1680," the other "married Lucinda Blake, April 6, 1686." We have, at this date, no further record of their parents.

We conclude that the genealogical line we are now tracing is lineally descended from the second of the two—John and Lucinda [Blake] Johnson.<sup>16</sup> Their marriage is entered upon the

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<sup>15</sup> "Parish register Christ Church," Middlesex, 1653-1812.

<sup>16</sup> It is a tradition in the family that an early ancestor, John Johnson, married Elizabeth Massie whose mother was an Ashley of the South Carolina Ashleys. The significance of the given names which frequently appear in more than two generations would tend to corroborate the tradition. The Johnsons and Massies are found neighbors in all the places where both families have lived. The name of Ashley as a land holder is not found on the Public records of those parts of Virginia, nor in the Parish or Quaker records, but is well known in South Carolina. The only proof we have of such a marriage connection is, as stated above, the significance of names. The ancestress was not a descendant of the family of Lord Ashley, afterward the Earl of Shaftesbury, as a mistaken tradition handed down through an aged Quaker declares. There is not the slightest evidence of such a marriage, either in the male or female line having taken place. Burke's Peerage [latest edition], gives the entire line of Lord Ashley's descendants to the last child born 1906. There was a "John Ashley Esqr of London—1682"—in the list of Caciques, the hereditary nobility of the colony under the Proprietary Government, which became extinct when that govern-



## ANCESTRY

parish register of Christ Church, Middlesex as follows:<sup>17</sup>

JOHN JOHNSON II., and Lucinda Blake,<sup>18</sup> both of this parish, were married Y<sup>e</sup> 6 of Aprill, 1686.

The following tract of land was granted to John Johnson in 1705:

“John Johnson, St. Peter’s parish, New Kent County, 252 Acres, Bordering on black creek, Thomas Snead’s Land, formerly granted to Thomas Reynolds by patent dated 28th of October, 1695, and by him deserted and since granted to the said John Johnson by order of the General Court 17th of Aprill, 1705, and is further due unto the said John Johnson for the transportation of five persons into the Colony whose names are to be in the records under this patent

“2nd of November, 1705.

EDW. NOTT.

“John Johnson, his patent for 252 Acres of Land in New Kent County.

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ment ceased. From this person there may have been at an early period a connection by marriage with the Massies of Ulster or of Charleston. Families of all these names are found in the early records and history of South Carolina.

“The first census of the United States in South Carolina, taken 1790, gives 132 Johnsons, 14 Massie, and 8 Ashley families in the different districts. Catherine Massie of the Charleston district owned 35 slaves, Henry 4, and James and William Massie 11 each.” The Ashleys held no slaves.

<sup>17</sup> Parish register Christ Church, Middlesex, 1653-1812, p. 29.

<sup>18</sup> The Blakes were of South Carolina. The family were Dissenters.

## RHODA M. COFFIN

“ WILLIAM DAVIDS,

“ SAMUEL MITCHELL,

“ JOAN CHILLARD,

“ DANIEL TABLES,

“ GEORGE OBRAHAM,

(Patent Book 9, page 704.)

This plantation described as “ on black creek,” in New Kent, was situated not far distant from a “ particular meeting ” of the Quakers on the same creek, which was known as Black Creek meeting, and belonged to the venerable Henrico Monthly Meeting. A number of parties in the region round about had, in 1699, contributed tobacco in various amounts from “ five hundred pounds and three days’ work ” to five pounds, to build a meeting house.<sup>19</sup> Thomas Story, a noted English Quaker, evangelist, who was born and brought up in the Church of England, “ visited the colony in 1705 and was treated with much kindness by the Governor.” He visited Black Creek meeting, Curles over in Henrico County, and other Friends in those parts. It is probable that these influences had much to do with winning the family of Johnson young people to cast their lot with Friends, for it appears to have been early in the century that their names

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<sup>19</sup> Southern Quakers and Slavery, p. 76.

## ANCESTRY

were enrolled among the Quakers. Whether or not the parents, John Johnson and his wife, united with Friends does not appear, but it is certain that their children joined in membership, their marriages having been accomplished and the marriage certificates recorded on the Record<sup>20</sup> books [1699-1756] of the Monthly Meeting held in Henrico County.<sup>20</sup>

The children of John II and Lucinda [Blake] Johnson, were, Ashley, Agnes, *John*, Massie [Massey]. No dates of births of these are recorded except that of John.<sup>21</sup>

Massie was baptized 5th of February, 1705.

JOHN III, the son of John Johnson and Lucinda, his wife, was born Y<sup>e</sup> 6th of Jany. and baptized Y<sup>e</sup> 24 of March, 1694.

That there were other children of this family is pretty clear, though we have no accurate record of them. The parish registers were irregularly kept and some are badly worn or lost.

Of Ashley, the eldest son, there is no reliable data.

Agnes, daughter of John and Lucinda [Blake] Johnson, married William Ellison, son of G.

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<sup>20</sup> Henrico Monthly Meeting was established 1698, or possibly at somewhat an earlier date.

<sup>21</sup> Parish register Christ Church, Middlesex Co., Va., 1653-1812, p. 44.

RHODA M. COFFIN

Robert Ellison of New Kent County, 6 mo 1722.<sup>22</sup>

Massie [Massey], daughter of John and Lucinda [Blake] Johnson, married Joseph Crew, son of John Crew of Charles City County, 6, 12 1725.<sup>23</sup>

JOHN III, son of John and Lucinda [Blake] Johnson, married Elizabeth Ellison,<sup>24</sup> 8th month 6, 1725. The marriage took place at the New Kent "particular" meeting, and is recorded in the records of Henrico Monthly Meeting, of which the Ellisons were now members.<sup>25</sup>

MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE OF JOHN JOHNSON AND ELIZABETH ELLYSON.

Whereas John Johnson son of John Johnson of Hanover County and Elizabeth Ellyson daughter of gered Robt Ellyson of Newkent County have proposed their intentions of Marage before two severall meetings of the peopell caled Quakers who after dew Enquire of

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<sup>22</sup> Taken from the original records of the Monthly meeting held at Henrico, Va., 1699-1756.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> The Ellisons were conspicuous figures and devoted laborers in the work of St. Peter's parish from the earliest history of the colony. They appear to have grasped the spiritual teachings of the Quakers early in the century. General Ellison owned a number of slaves whose names are on the parish records, 1721, and later.

<sup>25</sup> Same as <sup>22</sup>. John Johnson now styles himself of Hanover County, which was close on the border of Henrico, and was erected in 1720.

## ANCESTRY

their Clearness and it apearing to them that theay weare Cleare from all others on acct. of Marage and that ye Relations of ye Sd. John & Elizabeth ware Consenting to their Mariage Did giue Consent that the Sd. parties should accomplish their Intentions wee Therefore whose names are Under writen doe Certifie all whome it may Concern that the sd John Johnson and Elizabeth Ellyson did at a publick Meeting held of ye sd peopell in ye Meeting House in New Kente County *ye Sixth Day of ye Eight month one thousand Seven Hundred and twenth and five* Then and their take Each Other for wife and husband He the Sd John taking her the sd Elizabeth by the hand and declaring that before this Meeting I take Elizabeth Ellyson for my weded wife as long as we shall both live and she the sd Elizabeth then and their Likewise Declaring that before this meeting I take John Johnson for my weeded husband as long as wee shall Live and for Confirmation thereof the sd John Johnson and the sd Elizabeth doth seet their hands.

JOHN JOHNSON

ELIZABETH JOHNSON

And wee whose names are under are witnesses :

GERD. ROBT. ELLYSON

DANLL WILLMORE

JOHN CREW

JOHN ELMORE

THOS. ELMORE

JOHN CREW JUR

ROBERT ELLYSON

ELIZABETH JOHNSON

BENJ JOHNSON

MARY ELMORE

ANDREW CREW

AGATHY CREW

JOHN SCOTT JUR

JUDETH ELLYSON

THOMAS STANLEY

JUDETH SCOTT

AGNISS ELLYSON

CISCELIA WILLMORE

## RHODA M. COFFIN

These early Virginia settlers were migratory, and made many changes in their localities of living. The Meetings also were moved from place to place.

It is possible that one reason for these changes was the painful experience and unrest into which many were brought because—as was officially stated—“We Can not for Concience sake pay the Priests dewes & other Church demands.”\*

John Johnson appears to have suffered on religious grounds by distress for tythes, having stood against the tything system and been forced by the high Sheriff to yield.

The following minute is taken from the original records.

“At our Monthly Meeting held in Caroline

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\* In 1748 a new Clergy bill was passed. It was based on and is essentially the same as that of 1727. The Collectors were now given power to distrain on “slaves, goods, and chattels of the person or persons chargeable therewith.” There was no provision for any Class of Dissenters.

In a protest to the Governor and Assembly in 1739 against these forced payments the Quakers stated:

“We pay all taxes for support of Government, we transgress no laws of trade, we keep back no part of the revenue due to the crown, the publick are not charged in the leaste with our poar, and we nevertheless willingly contribute to the publick poar, and endeavor to follow peace with all men.” Quakers continued to suffer under the provisions of the laws on “Church rates” and “Militia fines.” It was reserved for the trying days of the Revolution to snap asunder the bonds of Church and State.—*Southern Quakers and Slavery*, pp. 152, 153.

## ANCESTRY

County, Y<sup>e</sup> 11th 9th mo. 1757, by report from Amelia meeting of Friends Sufferings, John Johnson had taken from him things to the value of seven pounds, ten shillings.”

By the middle of the century—the eighteenth—the Johnson families had extended their boundaries into Hanover, Campbell, Louisa and adjacent counties. John Johnson and his wife Elizabeth, after living many years in Hanover County, left their native state and removed to North Carolina, taking their grandson, John Johnson, with them. Remaining there but two and a half years, we find them again at their home in Hanover County, Va.

“ At our Monthly Meeting held at Cedar Creek 14th day of 12 mo 1765 John Johnson made application to this Meeting for a few lines by way of a certificate for themselves and families in order to join the Monthly Meeting of Friends at New Garden North Carolina.

8/9/ 1765 Agreeable to an order Made some time past. John Harris had Enquired into the life and Conversation of John Johnson and Elizabeth his wife, and John Johnson their grandson, who hath produced certificates for them which was read approved and signed.

Cedar Creek, Mo. Meeting held 3/12/1768. There were produced to this Meeting Certificates from New Garden in North Carolina for John Johnson and his wife Elizabeth, and their grandson John Johnson, bearing date 9/26/1767.<sup>26</sup> ”

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<sup>26</sup> Taken from the original records of Cedar Creek Monthly meeting, 1754-1803.

## RHODA M. COFFIN

Children of John III and Elizabeth [Ellyson] Johnson: *John*, Jessie, James, Gerard, William.

JOHN IV, son of John and Elizabeth [Ellyson] Johnson, was born 1732. He married 7th mo. 13, 1754, Lydia Watkins,<sup>27</sup> daughter of Benjamin and Priscilla Watkins of Goochland County. The Watkins were probably members of Genito meeting. Concerning their marriage, and later, their place of residence, the records of Cedar Creek Monthly Meeting show the following:

“At a Monthly Meeting at our usall place in Caroline the 8th 6th mo 1754, John Johnson & Ledy Watkins Published their entention of Marringe it being the first time. Charles Johnson & Garrat Ellison are appointed to Enquire the Clearness of John Johnson & make report to next Meetg.

At a Monthly Meeting held at Cader Creek the 13th 7 mo 1754 Those Friends Oppointed to Enquire into the Clearness of Jo<sup>n</sup>. Johnson & Ledy Watkins Gives Clear Account. John Johnson and Ledy Watkins Published their Entention of Marriage the Second time and are Left to their liberty to consumate their Marriage According to the good Rules Used amongst us.”

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<sup>27</sup> The Watkins Family, like the Ellison's, are found contemporary with the Johnsons on the very early parish records of St. Peter's in New Kent county, and belonged to the first established Quaker meetings of Virginia. Henry Watkins Sen. subscribed 500 pounds of tobacco in 1699, and Henry Jr. fifteen pounds, to build a meeting house. Lewis Watkins and Margaret Stone were married in St. Peter's, Jan. ye 6, 1712, and had a family.



## ANCESTRY

9/14/1754 Friends Oppointed to attend the Marriage of John & Ledy Watkins Give a good Account of the Proceedings of the same.

Whereas John Johnson son of John Johnson of the County of Amelia and Lydia Daughter of Benjamin Watkins, Deceased, of the County of Goochland having declared their intentions of taking Each other in Marriage before Several Monthly Meetings of the People Called Quakers in Hanover County according to the good order Used amongst them and were Approved of by the Said Meeting and having Consent of Parrents & Friends Concerned The Sd John Johnson & Lydia Watkins Appearing in a Publick Meeting of the afore-said People held at Ceder Creek in the sd County of hanover on the *13th Day of the Seventh Month 1754* and then and there in the Said assembly the Said John Johnson did take the Said Lydia Watkins by the hand and openly declare as follows, You are my Witnesses that I take Lydia Watkins to be my Wife promising to be unto her a true & Loving Husband Untill Death, or words to the Same Effect, and then immediately the Said Lydia Watkins having the said John Johnson by the hand did openly declare as follows You are my Witnesses that I take John Johnson to be my Husband promising to be unto him a true & Loving wife untill Death, or words to the same Effect. & the said Johnson & Lydia Watkins his now wife for a further Confirmation of the Marriage have hereunto subscribed their Names the Sd Lydia Watkins yakes upon herself the title & Sirname of the sd Johnson, and we whose

## RHODA M. COFFIN

names are hereunto Subscribed being Present at the  
Solemnization of the said Marriage & Subscription  
aforesaid Have as Witnesses Set our hands.

John Johnson

Lydia Johnson

Benjamin Harris    Benj Watkins    Necka Stone

Strangeman Hutchins    Jos Newby

To the Monthly Meeting at South River

Dear Friends

John Johnson a  
member of our Meeting having removed within your  
limits; and requested our Certificate for himself, his  
wife Lydia, & children Susana, John, Thomas & Lidia,  
and their affairs being settled to Satisfaction as far as  
we find, We do therefore recommend them to your  
care and notice and remain your friends,

Signed by order and on behalf of our Meeting held  
at Cedar Creek in Hanover County the 9th day of the  
5th month 1789.

By Micajah Crew Clerk.

Rachel Moorman Clk.

Both John Johnson IV and his wife Lydia,  
appear to have been devoted Friends. Their  
names frequently occur on the meeting records  
as witnesses to marriages of their neighbors and  
kinsmen. John Johnson, Sen., died 8th month  
31st 1816 at a small settlement called Ivy Creek,

## ANCESTRY

Bedford County, Va., at the age of eighty-four.<sup>28</sup>  
The death of his wife is not on record.

Children of John Johnson IV and Lydia [Watkins] Johnson: Judith, Susanna, James, Samuel, Joseph, *John*, born 2d mo. 5. 1766, Thomas, Lydia.

JOHN JOHNSON IV, the sixth child of John, Sen., and Lydia [Watkins] Johnson, was born 2d month 5th 1766.

Very little is known of his personal history. His name is found in the record of births of Cedar Creek Meeting.

As the years went on and the Johnson families multiplied, they changed their localities of living, as we have already stated, and many are found, in time, in Louisa, Campbell, Bedford and Amelia Counties. The marriage of John Johnson, Jun. (V) is recorded on the minutes of South River Monthly Meeting:

John Johnson of Bedford County, and Rhoda Moorman of Campbell County, married 10th mo. 21, 1789, at South River Meeting house.<sup>29</sup>

The marriage certificate was signed by twenty-seven members of their families and kinspeople who were witnesses to their marriage.

Rhoda Moorman was the daughter of Micajah

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<sup>28</sup> South River Monthly Meeting records.

<sup>29</sup> Taken from the original records.

## RHODA M. COFFIN

and Susannah Moorman, and the seventh child of a family of thirteen children. She was born at Lynchburg, Virginia, 8th month 15th, 1769.

Here John, Jun. (V) and his wife lived till his death, which took place January 14, 1803.

Rhoda [Moorman<sup>30</sup>] Johnson was left a widow with seven children. James, the youngest, was born six weeks after his father died.

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<sup>30</sup> Micajah Moorman was one of the most prominent early settlers in Campbell Co., Va. He was one of the "gentleman" trustees into whose hands John Lynch vested the "land to be laid off in lots and to whom the General Assembly granted a charter, October 1786 for" a town to be known by the name of Lynchburg. "Lynchburg and its people," p. 23 and 68. As long as he lived he was a conspicuous figure in the town and is still held in honored memory by its people. He was a Quaker and ceased to hold slaves after the Society declared against the practice. Lynchburg, as late as the year 1800, had upwards of one thousand slaves. Stephen Grelette, a travelling Quaker minister, says in his journal, "the slaves in that part of the country are treated with more cruelty than I have seen elsewhere." ("Life of Stephen Grelette.")

A quaint and interesting instrument is recorded upon the Campbell Co., Va., records showing that William, James, and Christopher Johnson, emancipated twenty-four negro slaves in 1782, probably after the conscience of the Quakers had caused them to take decided steps against their members keeping negroes in bondage. There are "disownments" on record of Thomas Johnson, Samuel Johnson, Samuel Moorman, and others, as late as 1795 "for hiring slaves," "for holding a slave," "for purchasing a slave," and like misdemeanors respecting slavery.

Such were the environments of Rhoda [Moorman] Johnson during her younger years.

## ANCESTRY

The decease of her father, Micajah Moorman, took place 1806. By his will, placed upon record, November 25th, 1806,<sup>31</sup> he left large tracts of land in the State of Ohio to his wife, Susannah, and to his daughter Rhoda and other of his children, and stated in his will that, "I desire my wife and her children, who care to, to move to the places in Ohio left them by me."

A great tract of land which was originally of the large military tract set apart by the Government to the State of Ohio, and lay in Warren County, was purchased from Jacob R. Brown in 1799, by a Quaker named Abijah O'Neill. Ohio became a state in 1803, and for many reasons which we cannot here discuss, was an inviting field for the migrating Quakers of Virginia to possess. "There were no grave obstacles," says Stephen Weeks, "in the way of its peaceful conquest, save Indians and distance."

With irrepressible energy Rhoda [Moorman] Johnson set out on the long journey to Ohio in 1809 with her seven children. Her certificate<sup>32</sup> of membership addressed to Center Monthly Meeting of Friends, Clinton County, Ohio, dated 11th mo 11th 1809, recommends her and

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<sup>31</sup> Probate Records, Campbell Co., Va., Nov. 25, 1806.

<sup>32</sup> Taken from "Certificates of Removal," by South River Monthly Meeting of Friends, Campbell Co., Va.

## RHODA M. COFFIN

her children,—the name of each child given,—to the “Christian care and oversight” of Friends in her new home and surroundings. They were accompanied by her mother, Susannah Moorman, and her granddaughter, Molly Moorman, and other emigrants, all of whom settled in Ohio. A large number of relatives and friends had preceded them to “Miami,” Ohio, in the early spring of 1806, among these were her brother Charles Moorman and his family, and eight Johnson families, together with the Terrells and Butterworths.

Mrs. Coffin gives an interesting sketch of her Grandmother Johnson in Chapter I, page 6, of this book.

The children of John, Jr., (V) and Rhoda [Moorman] Johnson,<sup>33</sup> Joseph, born 4 mo 7, 1791; Micaiah, born 12th mo 28, 1792; *John VI*, born 1st mo 3, 1795; Charles, born 1st mo 14, 1797; Polly,<sup>34</sup> born 1st mo. 14, 1799; Lewis, born 3rd mo 7, 1801; James, born 2d mo. 25, 1803.

JOHN JOHNSON VI, the third son, and the father of Mrs. Rhoda M. Coffin, was born near Lynchburg, Virginia, 1st month 3d, 1795. He was twelve years of age when the family removed to Ohio.

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<sup>33</sup> From the original records of South River Monthly Meeting Minutes.

<sup>34</sup> Afterwards called Mary.

## ANCESTRY

He married Judith Faulkner,<sup>35</sup> daughter of David and Judith Faulkner, 5th month 22d, 1816.

The list of their children will be found on pages 10 and 11.

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<sup>35</sup> The Faulkners were of the northern wing of emigrants who were early settlers in Frederick County, Virginia, at Hopewell Monthly Meeting [or Opequon], and were there as early as 1751. Some members of the family who came from Culpepper Co. are found in the more southern settlements in 1766, and others went to North Carolina in 1754. But this branch of the family lived in Frederick County.

David Faulkner was born June 25th, 1749. He married, 1770, Judith Thornburg, daughter of Abel Thornberg and ——— Brooks.

The Brooks family went from Culpepper Co., Va., to Hanover County, Va., the middle of the century. John Brooks purchased land in Louisa County, Va., in 1748.

On March 28, 1788, Jesse Faulkner conveyed to David Faulkner a tract of 123 acres of land described in the deed as lying in the drains of Opequon Creek in Frederick County, Va., and the following day Thomas Barnett conveyed to David Faulkner six acres adjoining the first mentioned tract. (Deed book 26, p. 275-277. Frederick Co. Records, Winchester, Va.) On February 5th, 1800, David and Judith Faulkner conveyed this same tract of land described in the deed—129 acres—to James Curl. The Opequon Creek flows through a portion of Apple Pie Ridge.

Again on September 9, 1809, David Faulkner gives a deed of release to James Curl for the unpaid purchase money on the same 129 acres, and in the deed he refers to himself as "David Faulkner of Green County, Ohio, formerly of Frederick Co., Va."

Children of David and Judith [Thornberg] Faulkner.

Mary died in infancy; Martha, married William Walker; Jesse, married Hannah Sheppard; Phoebe, married William Ballard; Thomas, married Elizabeth McGuire; David; Mary, married Thomas Johnson; Judith, born April 3d, 1797, married John Johnson; Solomon, married Ruth Beales; Rachel, married Thomas Arnett. See Chapter I, pages 6-7.











